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# THE WORKS

OF

# HEINRICH HEINE

X

# THE WORKS

OF

# HEINRICH HEINE

VOLUME X.

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1904

# NEW POEMS

TRANSLATED BY

MARGARET ARMOUR

AUTHOR OF "THE FALL OF THE NIBELUNGS," "SONGS OF LOVE AND DEATH," "THE SHADOW OF LOVE," ETC.

LONDON
WILLIAM HEINEMANN
1904

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# PUBLISHER'S NOTE

*I was able in* 1890 *to persuade the late Charles Godfrey Leland to undertake the translation of the complete works of Heinrich Heine. The plan was to divide them into twelve volumes, and he did actually accomplish the work of translating the first eight volumes, viz. those containing the prose. The last four volumes he did not live to finish, and it has been an anxious matter for me to find a translator or translators worthy to complete an undertaking which always seemed to me very admirably begun by Mr. Leland. I hope I have succeeded in finding two translators who are not unworthy to complete his task. Unfortunately the author of the version of "The Book of Songs" also died without being able himself to see the sheets through the press. If there are any shortcomings in his work therefore, they must not be laid too severely at his door. The last three volumes are being done by Margaret Armour (Mrs. W. B. Macdougall), and I have every confidence in presenting her work as that of a most highly-gifted poetical translator.*

WM. HEINEMANN.

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# NEW POEMS.

# NEW POEMS.

## *NEW SPRING.*

(1831.)

### PROLOGUE.

THERE'S a knight upon whose story
  Oft in galleries you'll chance,
Grimly girt for battle-glory,
  With his doughty shield and lance.

But the little loves that call him
  Steal his lance and sword with glee:
With their flower-chains enthrall him
  When he struggles to be free.

So in golden chains I dally,
  Glad and grieving as I rhyme,
While my comrades rise and rally
  To the battle-field of Time.

I.

White the tree where you are sitting;
  You can hear the far wind railing,
And you watch the brooding heavens
  That the sullen mists are veiling;

And you see how shorn the meadow,
  And how dead and drear the wold is:
Winter round you and within you,
  For your frozen heart as cold is.

On a sudden fall the snowflakes,
  And you fancy, vexed a minute,
That the tree has rained upon you
  All the snow that it had in it.

'Twas not snow that fell so whitely;
  Sweetly startled, you discover
Spring has loosed her fragrant petals,
  And they tease, and star you over.

Ah, the rapture and the wonder!
  Where the snow was, blossoms thronging;
Merry May, instead of winter;
  For your heart, new love and longing.

2.

Like a maiden shy for gladness,
Leaves unfold them in the wood;
"Gentle Spring, I give thee greeting!"
Laughs the sun in merry mood.

'Tis, O nightingale! thy music
'Plaining blissful in the grove;
Long and sweet thy notes are sobbing,
And thy song is utter love!

3.

The lovely eyes of the spring-sweet night
Look down and heal my pain:
"Has Love abased thee with his might,
O Love will raise again."

And Philomela on the lime
Now sweetly sings her sadness;
The music's goal is in my soul,
That hears, and swells for gladness.

4.

I'm in love with a flower, but know not which;
So I grieve apart.
I peer in each cup for a treasure rich;
I look for a heart.

In the sunset gold the nightingales pine,
The flowers are sweet.
I look for a heart that's as fond as mine,
And as fond shall beat.

The nightingale sings, and I know, I know
What her song says clear;
We are both so fearful and full of woe,
Of woe and fear.

5.

With many a bud and posy,
O May is come anew!
And clouds are sailing rosy,
Above in heaven's blue.

The nightingales are singing
From their high, embowered seat;
The lambkins white are springing
In the clover green and sweet.

Too sick for singing, springing,
Alone on a grassy spot,
I hear a distant ringing,
And dream, I know not what.

6.

In my heart there's music low,
Lovely bells are chiming;
Little song, swell out and go
Springward with your rhyming.

To the bowers that house the flowers
Hasten for the meeting.
If you chance upon a rose,
Say, I send her greeting.

7.

The butterfly is in love with the rose:
Flits round her for delight;
But himself the amorous sunbeam woos,
Hovering soft and golden-bright.

And who is the rose in love with, say?
I've sought the answer far;
Is it the singing nightingale?
Is it the silent evening star?

I know not with whom the rose is in love,
But each and all love I,—
The rose, the sun, the evening star,
The nightingale and the butterfly!

8.

All the trees are ringing music,
There's a singing in each nest—
In this woodland orchestration,
Who is leader of the rest?

Can it be the grey-winged plover,
Nodding grave and circumspectly?
Or the pedant who, up yonder,
Times his "cuckoo" so correctly?

Or perhaps the stork who sternly
Looks the leader to the life,
And with noisy bill is tapping
In the loud, melodious strife?

No, the leader's in my bosom
Who's conducting all the grove;
I can hear the time he's beating,
And I think his name is Love.

9.

In the Beginning first was made
The nightingale; "Jug! Jug!" she sang.
Green grass and violets filled the glade,
And apple-trees in blossom sprang.

She bit her bosom till it bled,
And from the blood there grew a rose;
It blossomed where the blood was shed;
She sings to it her love and woes.

And now we birds may dwell in peace,
Our sins, through blood, forgiven all;
But, should the rose-song ever cease,
Our wood must straight in ruins fall.

Thus on the oak the sparrow wise
Tells to his son the story blest;
While, perched above with watchful eyes,
The mother peeps into the nest:

A thrifty wife and never sour,
Her only care to build and breed;
The father, just to pass an hour,
Instructs his children in the creed.

10.

So sweet with spring the night and warm,
That flowers are peeping through;
My heart must guard it well from harm.
Or it will love anew.

But which of all the flowers dear
Is like to be the snarer?
The nightingales are singing clear,
"The lily; so beware her!"

II.

I must up and do, the bells are ringing;
And oh! I have lost my senses quite!
The spring and a pair of lovely eyes
Have leagued them against my heart for spite.

The spring and a pair of lovely eyes
Tempt me to folly, and folly's ruing!
I think that the roses and nightingales
Are deep in the plot for my undoing.

12.

Ah, mine eyes in tears would steep them—
Lovers' tears of bliss and woe;
'Tis my heart would have me weep them,
And I fear that they will flow.

Love, the giver of sweet anguish,
Love, the bitter and the blest—
Love has come again to languish
In my scarcely healëd breast.

13.

Blue eyes of spring are smiling,
And in the grass awake;
'Tis of the pretty violets
My posy I will make.

I pluck them, musing sweetly,
And lo! with raptured tongue,
What my heart was only sighing,
The nightingale has sung.

Yes, what I thought she's singing,
She's singing loud and clear;
My tender secret's ringing
For all the wood to hear.

14.

If your gown but, in your going,
Brush me soft and unaware,
Sings my heart, and wildly follows
Where your foot has made it fair.

But, when you turn with great sweet eyes,
My heart's confounded so,
That it hardly dares to follow
Where your feet, beloved, go.

15.

The slender water-lily
  Dreams from the lake below,
Toward the moon who greets her
  With shining love and woe.

Above the waves she bends her—
  Abashed her beauty sweet—
And sees her lover pining
  And pale before her feet.

16.

If, with eyes that serve you truly,
  You but scan my songs with care,
You will see a pretty maiden,
  For I know she wanders there.

If your ears are quick of hearing,
  You will hear her very voice,
And her laughter, sighs, and singing
  Will befool you, and rejoice.

With her words and with her glances
  She'll perplex, like mine, your mood;
And in spring, a dreaming lover,
  You will wander through the wood.

17.

What drives thee on through the spring-sweet night?
Thou hast maddened the flowers; with affright
The violets shrink and alter!
The roses for very shame are red,
And wan the lilies as the dead:
They wail, and fail, and falter!

Dear moon, what a pious folk is this!
And yet my deed was much amiss,
And they may well reprove me!
But how could I know they listened, and heard
Each wild and love-delirious word
I raved to the stars above me?

18.

When soft on me, beloved,
Thy blue eyes fondly gaze,
I am as if in dreamland,
And dumb for sweet amaze.

Upon thine eyes of blue, dear,
I think where'er I go:
The blue thoughts, like a sea, dear,
Fill deep my heart and flow.

19.

Once again my heart is conquered,
And the dreary wrong that maddened
Is forgot, and May is breathing
The delight of old that gladdened.

In the streets the most frequented,
In the hope of happy chancing,
'Neath each hat the fair one seeking,
Late and early I keep glancing.

On the bridge again I linger,
By the water greenly flowing—
Ah, if only she should cross it,
And should gaze on me in going!

And I hear a gentle sighing
In the water's rush and falling,
And my blissful heart hears plainly
What the white-tipped waves are calling

And I lose my way when dreaming
Through the lanes and alleys winding,
And the birds upon the bushes
Mock the fool whom love is blinding.

20.

The rose smells sweet—but if to her own finding
She sweetly smells: whether the nightingale
Has felt through her own soul the rapture winding,
As we, when her fond echoes ring and fail:—

I know not. But the truth will often grieve us!
And if the rose, and if the nightingale
But feign, the lie that can so sweet deceive us
May, like some others, be of some avail.

21.

Ah, blame me not! I flee thy face
Only because I love thee so.
How could thy face of blooming grace
Match mine that is so full of woe!

Because I love thee I am wan.
So lean my cheek and fallen from grace,
That hateful it would seem anon—
Ah! blame me not, who flee thy face!

22.

I wander 'mid the flowers, dear,
And with the flowers blow;
I wander as in dreamland,
And totter as I go.

Uphold me! At thy feet, dear,
I shall fall if I but move;
The garden's full of folk, dear,
And I am drunk with love.

23.

As the imaged moon may tremble
On the tumult of the deep,
Yet her quiet path securely
Through the vault of heaven keep:

So, beloved, sure and steadfast
In thy going still thou art,
And thy image only trembles
On the tossing of my heart.

24.

Our hearts the Holy Alliance
Have made and ratified duly;
They have beaten close together,
And know each other truly.

But the rosebud that your bosom
Made lovelier with its breath,
Our luckless little ally,
Is almost crushed to death.

25.

Tell me the man who first, misguided,
Time into minutes and hours divided.
He was a cold and a dismal wight
Who would sit and brood through the winter night,
And count the squeaks of the mice in the wall,
And the regular tick of the wood-worm small.
Tell me who kisses invented first.
Oh, a happy man with a mouth athirst.
With never a thought he kissed away;
And that was in the month of May,
When earth was bright with flowers springing,
When laughed the sun, and birds were singing.

26.

Ah, the gilly flowers, how fragrant!
Lo! the wistful stars of even
Like a swarm of bees are golden
In the violet-blue of heaven.

White and fain the manor glimmers
From the chestnuts' shadowy reaches,
And I hear the glass door rattle:
Hear the whispered lovers' speeches.

Sweet alarm and blissful trembling!
Secret, fearful, tender clinging!—
And the budding roses hearken,
And the nightingales are singing.

27.

Once before have I not dreamed it—
Dreamed delight as sweet as this is?
Tree for tree the same, dear, seemed it:
Trees and flowers, looks and kisses.

Was the leaf-veiled moon not peeping
On this bower, where a rill was?
Were the marble gods not keeping
Watch without, that then as still was?

Ah, these dreams and their endearments—
Dreams, too happy, of a lover!
Well I know that snowy cerements
Hearts and trees alike will cover.

Shunned, forgotten, each by each, dear,
We'll grow colder like the weather:
We who now, with tender speech, dear,
Cling, and crush our hearts together.

28.

In the dark the kisses stolen,
  In the dark the kiss returned—
Ah, how blessed are such kisses
  To the soul where love has yearned!

Sad with memory and foreboding
  Thinks the soul, while kisses last,
Many a mournful thought, unbidden,
  Of the future and the past.

But to think so much and doubt, is
  Doubtful wisdom when we kiss;—
Ah, my soul, try weeping rather,
  Weeping's easier than this!

29.

There was an aged king once;
  His heart was sad, his head was grey.
The poor old king, he wedded
  A maiden young and gay.

There was a pretty page once;
  His head was blond, his heart was fain.
The youthful queen he followed,
  To carry her silken train.

'Tis an old old song. Do you know it?
It rings so sweet, it rings so drear
For they had both to perish—
Alas! they loved too dear.

30.

The pictures dim and faded
Again in memory glow—
In your voice what is the music,
That it should move me so?

Ah, say not that you love me!
Though, matched with that, the spring,
And love, and all that's fairest
Would seem a little thing.

Ah, say not that you love me!
Be dumb, and kiss instead;
And smile, when, on the morrow,
I show you roses dead.

31.

"Linden blossoms, drunk with moonlight,
Pour their scent in fragrant showers,
And the nightingales, with music,
Flood the air and fill the bowers.

"It is sweet to sit, beloved,
'Neath the linden, sweet together,
When the moon is glinting golden
Through the leaves in golden weather.

"Mark this leaf! and, in its shaping,
Clear a heart you will discover;
That is why beneath the linden
Sits so gladly every lover.

"But you smile as if, in dreamland,
Fond and far your thoughts were winging—
What desires, my heart's beloved,
In the heart I love are springing?"

I will tell, and tell thee gladly:
Might but now a north wind, blowing
Cold and bitter, on a sudden
Set the heavens whitely snowing!

In a sleigh bedecked and merry,
In our furs were we but riding,
Whips a-cracking, bells a-ringing,
Over field and river gliding!

32.

Through the wood, and through the shining
Of the moon, I saw them going:
Saw the elves where they were riding,
Bells a-ringing, horns a-blowing;

And a golden antler carried
All the white and gleaming horses,
And wild swans they seemed in flying
Through the air upon their courses;

And the elfin queen was laughing,
And she nodded to me under.
Was my love, my new love greeted?
Was it death she meant, I wonder?

33.

Every morn I send thee violets
Found at dawn in woodland bowers,
And at night I bring the roses
I have plucked in dusky hours.

Dost thou know the fragrant secret
That the pretty flowers tell?
Through the day thou shalt be faithful,
And at night shalt love me well.

34.

Your letter only proved, dear,
  There's very little wrong;
You said, no more you loved, dear—
  But, still, the letter's long.

Twelve pages neat and full, dear!
  A volume for perusal!
One writes less as a rule, dear,
  When sending a refusal.

35.

Never fear I will betray, dear,
  To the world my love for thee,
When my mouth thy beauty praises,
  And the metaphors flow free.

Underneath a wood of flowers,
  In the quiet shade concealed,
Lies our sweet and glowing secret—
  Deep it burns and unrevealed.

Never fear if, from the roses,
  Some suspicious sparks should throng!
In such flames the world believes not:
  It will only think it song.

36.

Spring, that turns my days to music,
Fills the night with music too;
To my deepest dreams it follows—
Greenly echoes, piercing through.

Only there the birds sing sweeter:
Flute as birds of fable did;
Winds are softer; from the violet
Milder yearns the fragrance hid.

And the roses, blooming redder,
Wear a childlike golden glory,
Like the little heads of angels
In some holy, painted story.

And, a nightingale myself then,
To the roses red I seem
To be pouring out my passion—
Magic music in a dream;

Till the sun, arising, wakes me
Or, perhaps, the lovely song
Of the nightingales—those others—
That before my window throng.

37.

Stars with little feet and golden
  Move above me, hushed and light,
Lest they wake the earth who's sleeping
  In the quiet lap of night.

And the silent forests listen,
  Every leaf an ear of green,
And the mountain stretches forward
  With his shadow-arm serene.

Some one called? The music echoes,
  In my heart it rings and fails.
Was it she, my soul's beloved?
  Was the voice the nightingale's?

38.

Grave is the spring; she dreams of sadness,
  And moved with grief the flowers blow;
The nightingale, for all her gladness,
  Hides in her song a note of woe.

Ah, smile not thou, my dear, my fair one!
  Thy friendly smile too joyful is.
Nay, weep! A tear, did it but bear one,
  From off thy cheek I fain would kiss.

39.

Once more my heart is torn untimely
From the dear heart I love so true,
Once more my heart is torn untimely—
How fain to stay, ah, would you knew!

The carriage rolls, the bridge shakes under,
The river glides below so drear;
And bliss and I, we go asunder;
I leave the heart I love so dear.

The stars rush on through heaven's spaces,
As if before my woe they flew—
Farewell, dear love! though far my place is,
My heart will always bloom for you.

40.

The tender wishes blossom,
And wither at a breath,
And bloom again and wither—
Until they cease in death.

'Tis knowing this that saddens
For me the love most blest:
My heart has learned such wisdom
That it bleeds within my breast.

41.

With a single eye of red,
And the drifting clouds for hair,
Frown the heavens overhead,
Like an old man's face of care.

Were a glance to light on earth,
Flower and bud would ruined fall;
In the heart, forlorn of mirth,
Love and songs would wither all.

42.

Loathing, reluctant, with a heart of lead,
I travel sullen through a world as cold.
Autumn is almost over, mists enfold
A land that is already bare and dead.

The whistling winds dishevel boughs that shed
The reddened leaves, fast loosening from their hold;
The pastures steam around the sighing wold,
And now the rain brings misery to a head!

43.

Autumn mists, that linger over
Hill and hollow, wanly dream.
Storms have stripped the trees of cover;
Bare and thin, like ghosts, they seem.

There is one, and one tree only,
That its foliage has not shed;
Tear-bedewed it stands and lonely:
Shakes a sad and leafy head.

Ah, this wilderness my heart is!
Summer-green, by storm unmoved,
Like the trees your fairer part is,
Woman lovely and beloved!

44.

Heavens workaday and weary!
And the town the same as ever!
Still reflected dull and dreary
In the Elbe, the houses shiver.

Still the same eternal blowing
Of the noses long and ugly;
Still the hypocrites are going,
Just as servile, just as smugly.

Beauteous South, more fair behind me
Seem thy heavens and thy gods,
Since I turned from thee, to find me
With this weather and these clods!

# MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

(1832–1839.)

# MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

## (1832–1839.)

## *SERAPHINA.*

### I.

THROUGH the wood when I am wandering
In the dusky eventide,
Goes a dainty form in silence
Always closely by my side.

Is not this thy veil, the white one?
This the gentle face I love?
Is it merely moonlight breaking
Through the gloomy firs above?

Is that sound the sound of weeping
From mine own eyes welling deep?
Or dost thou, beloved, truly
Walk to-night by me and weep?

2.

Through the clouds the moon is breaking;
Hushed, the shore is lying under;
On the waves the night has fallen,
And they whisper and they wonder:

"Is yon man some silly creature,
Or a prey to lovers' madness,
That his mien should be so merry,
And withal so marred with sadness?"

But the moon, she laughs and answers—
Answers clear: "If you must know it,
He is both in love and silly,
And, what's more, he is a poet."

3.

Tis a white and lonely sea-gull
That flaps against the sky,
Far over the darkling waters;
The moon in heaven is high.

From the waves the shark and the rayfish
Snap upward where they lie;
The sea-gull is mounting, falling;
The moon in heaven is high.

Dear soul, that so terror-driven
And fearfully dost fly,
The water is too near thee,
The moon in heaven is high!

4.

The sea lies hushed beneath the moon;
The waves are murmuring low;
I think upon a sad old tune,
And my heart is full of woe;—

On the sad old song, and how it sings
Of the cities lost and fair,
Whence, upward from the deep, there rings
The sound of bell and prayer.

But neither prayer nor bell will save
Those cities doomed of yore,
For what is buried in the grave
Returns again no more.

5.

Although I knew you loved me:
For long had known it clear:
When at the last you told me,
My heart was filled with fear.

I walked upon the mountain,
And sang aloud for glee,
And, when the sun was sinking,
I wept beside the sea.

My heart is like the sun now,
That flames in fire above;
It sinks, as great and golden,
In a boundless sea of love.

6.

How curiously the sea-gull
Looks down and tries to guess
Why, on your lips, my ear thus
So warm and close I press.

What from your mouth you pour, love,
Is what she fain would hear:
Whether with words or kisses
You fill my asking ear.

Ah, knew my soul itself, dear,
What murmurs there so kind!
The words are with the kisses
So strangely intertwined!

*7.*

She fled before me like a roe
  That swiftly makes for cover:
With hair that streamed upon the wind,
  Flew up the crags and over.

But, where the cliffs fall downward sheer,
  I found her, following fleetly;
And wooed, until her heart was mild,
  With words of sweetness, sweetly.

And there we sat so heaven-high,
  And glad with heaven's wonder;
Below us, in the dusky sea
  The sun went slowly under.

Below us, in the dusky sea
  The sun went down and darkened;
The waves, for rapture, tossed and sang,
  And shouted where we hearkened:

Ah, mourn him not: he is not dead
  'Neath yonder billows hoary;
Within my heart he's lying hid,
  And flames in all his glory.

8.

The Church of the third New Testament
  Upon this rock we build,
That, founded strong, it may endure;
  Grief's measure is fulfilled.

The difference betwixt us twain
  No more shall fool and sever;
The stupid torment of the flesh
  Is ended, and forever.

Dost hear how God in yonder sea
  Speaks with a thousand voices?—
How God above us, in His stars,
  His thousand stars, rejoices?

God dwells in light, and has His home
  Within the dark abysses;
For everything that is, is God—
  Yea, God is in our kisses.

9.

All the little stars are shining,
  Grey with night the waves are falling;
Long-resounding, through the darkness
  I can hear the waters calling.

With the lusty, naked billows
  Plays the north wind rude and hoary;
And they trip and swell and clamour,
  Like an organ-peal of glory.

Pagan, Christian notes are mingled
  In that song the waves are voicing,
And it mounts to heaven, surging,
  Till the stars can hear, rejoicing:

Till they hear, and grow for gladness
  In their golden-clustered places,
And each star, a sun for splendour,
  Treads the void, eternal spaces:

Till they circle to the music,
  Whirl and dance the maddest measure,
And a nightingale each star is,
  Singing loud and sweet for pleasure.

In a vast, tumultuous chorus
  Sea and sky together thunder,
And a giant-rapture fills me,
  And my heart is big with wonder.

10.

Shadow-love and shadow-kisses,
Shadow-life—the whole how strange!
Dost thou think, sweet fool, that this is
Only true, and will not change?

All we hold was made for losing,
Swift as dreams we cannot keep;
Hearts forget without their choosing,
And the eyes, they fall asleep.

11.

Beside the sea the maiden
Stood sighing deep for woe;
Her heart was heavy-laden,
The sunset moved her so.

Dear maid, there's naught to grieve you,
'Tis an ancient trick. You'll find
Though the sun in front may leave you,
He'll rise again behind.

12.

With sails of black my ship I sail
Over the stormy sea;
Thou knowest well how sad I am,
And how thou grievest me.

Thy heart is faithless as the wind
That flutters loose and free;
With sails of black my ship I sail
Over the stormy sea.

13.

How bad thy deed and shameful,
Though from men I may withhold it,
I have sailed away to the open sea,
And to the fishes told it.

Although on land untarnished
I choose to leave thy name,
Away, in the whole wide ocean,
They have been told thy shame

14.

The waves roll in and thunder,
With crash and roar;
They swell, and break asunder
Upon the shore.

They surge and mount unceasing:
Tumultuously spend
Their passionate increasing—
And to what end?

15.

The Runic stone from the sea rears high,
Where I sit and dream and ponder;
The winds, they pipe; the sea-gulls cry;
The billows foam and wander.

Oh, many a maiden loved have I,
With many a lad gone roaming.—
Where are they now? The winds, they sigh;
The billows wander foaming.

16.

The sea is shining in the sun,
As if he were of gold;
When I am dead, my brothers,
Bury me in the sea.

For I have always loved the sea;
His healing waves of old
Have cooled my heart so often!
Good friends were I and he.

## ANGELICA.

1.

Now that heaven nods its favour,
Shall I stand, a mute confounded:
I who, knowing sorrow's savour,
Sang my woes till they resounded?—

Till a thousand youths despairing
Echoed after: told their passion
In the songs of my preparing,
Served anew in feebler fashion.

Nightingales, whose chorussed voices
In my soul I carry ringing,
Up and tell how love rejoices!
Tune your throats for raptured singing!

2.

One backward glance you always threw me,
However quick you passed me by,—
Your mouth, as if for question, open,
And pride tempestuous in your eye.

Would I had never sought to stay it:
That gown of white that went so fleet!
Would I might lose the track for ever,
Left lovely by your little feet!

Vanished at last is all your wildness;
Tame, like the rest, you meekly bow,
Serene, and kind beyond enduring;
And ah! you even love me now!

3.

Pretty maiden, I believe not
What your lips so harshly say;
Eyes so big and black and melting
Are not much in virtue's way.

Strip the lies off, for I love you—
Brown-streaked lies that would delude!
Kiss me with your heart that white is—
Heart of white, hast understood?

4.

How the fancy of a moment
Leads to tenderest of ties!
From the trivial beginning
How the boundless passions rise!

For this lady, hourly waxes
  Yearning deep within my heart,
Till I almost am persuaded
  That I love her, for my part.

Fair her soul is,—although, frankly,
  That is just as it may be;
Of her lovely face I'm surer,
  That my eyes can plainly see.

Ah, the waist! And ah, the forehead!
  And the nose! Her smile, how tender
On her lips it grows and gladdens!
  And how straight she stands and slender!

5.

Ah, how fair you are when sweetly
  You your mind to me disclose,
And, with sentiments the noblest,
  Your oration overflows!

When you tell me how so worthy
  And so lofty are your views:
How to pride of heart you never
  Can a sacrifice refuse!

And how vainly one, with millions,
Would essay your love to buy—
Ere you sold yourself for money,
You would much prefer to die!

And I stand and meekly listen
Till the story's fully told,
Like a dumb adoring statue;
And my hands I meekly fold.

6.

I close her eyes and keep them tight,
And on her mouth I kiss;
And now she plagues me day and night
To know the cause of this.

From evening late till morning light
She's always asking this:
"Why do you close my eyes so tight
When on my mouth you kiss?"

I tell her not; I know not quite
Just what the reason is—
I close her eyes and keep them tight,
And on her mouth I kiss.

7.

When, blest by the warmth of your kisses kind,
Enraptured in your arms I lie,
Talk not of Germany, never of that;
I cannot endure it—there's reason why.

Leave me in peace as to that, I entreat you!
Plague me not endlessly, asking reply,
As to kindred and home, and manner of living;
I cannot endure it—there's reason why.

Green is the oak there, blue-eyed are the women,
The women of Germany; softly they sigh
Of love and of hope, of hope and believing!
I cannot endure it—there's reason why.

8.

Fear not, love; from every danger
You are hidden safe and sure;
None will steal us: on each stranger,
See, I bolt the door secure.

You may mock the storm, unmovëd,
For these walls are builded stout;
And in case of fire, beloved,
I will blow the candle out.

Should my arms your neck enfold, dear
I entreat you, do not chide;
One so soon may catch a cold, dear,
When one's shawl is thrown aside.

9.

— — — — — —
— — — — — —
— — — — — —
— — — — — —

White, how lily-white her hands are!
How her hair in dreamy ringlets
Falls about her rosy face!
Perfect is her loveliness.

Yet to-day—(though why, I know not),—
She is scarcely, to my fancy,
Quite so slender as she once was,
She might easily be slimmer.

10.

After other people's treasures
While I'm peering round, and prying
At the doors of lovely strangers:
At their windows yearning, sighing:

Other people may be seeking
In another place their pleasure:
May be ogling at the windows
Where myself I keep my treasure.

'Tis but human! God in heaven
Bless our goings still, and guard us!
Bless and keep us, all and sundry,
And with fortune good reward us!

II.

You're indeed my ideal; I never was loth
To admit it, and oft, to my pleasure,
Have confirmed it with many a kiss and an oath;
But to-day I am not at leisure.

To-morrow come 'twixt two and three;
New flames will show you whether
My love could more devoted be;
And then we'll dine together.

If still for sale some tickets are,
I might prolong the revel:
Might to the opera go—so far;
They're playing *Robert the Devil.*

A great and wondrous work is this,
On Devils' love affairs;
By Scribe the bad libretto is;
The music's Meyerbeer's.

12.

Dismiss me not, though now your thirst
Is quenched with love's sweet wine;
But keep me still three months or so,
Till I have sated mine.

If thou canst be my love no more,
Be still my lovely friend;
'Tis meet that friendship should begin
When love is at an end.

13.

Now the carnival of loving,
And the heart-intoxication
Ends at last, and, disenchanted,
Leaves us yawning at each other.

We have drunk and drained the goblet
To the brim that foamed and sparkled
With delirium of the senses;
We have drained the goblet dry.

Dumb the fiddles now that fiddled
Tunes so lusty for our dancing,
For the dancing of our senses;
Mute the fiddles now and dumb.

And the lamps are dim and darkened,
Lamps that poured their light fantastic
On the garish masquerading;
Now the lamps have all been quenched.

And Ash-Wednesday's to-morrow,
And the sign upon your forehead
Of the ashen cross I make now:
Woman, know that thou art dust!

## *DIANA.*

1.

Lo! this fair and noble form
  Of colossal womanhood
  Yields with rapture to my mood:
Yields her, unresisting, warm.

Had I given passion reins—
  Sought by force to win and keep—
  I had rued, and rued it deep!
She had thrashed me for my pains.

Throat, neck, bosom! Fairer even,
  (Could I see so high) the face!
  Ere I trust to her embrace,
I'll commend my soul to heaven.

2.

'Twas by the Bay of Biscay
  That first she drew her breath;
Already, in the cradle,
  She crushed two cats to death.

She crossed the Pyrenees then,
In barefoot loveliness;
At Perpignan they showed her—
A youthful giantess.

The Faubourg Saint-Denis, now,
With her style and state resounds;
She costs the little Sir William
A cool ten thousand pounds.

3.

Dearly loved and noble Doña,
When I gaze upon your grace,
I remember old Bologna,
And the ancient market-place.

'Neath the Fountain of the Giant
Once again I seem to stand—
'Neath the Neptune, moulded pliant
To Giovanni's master-hand.

## *HORTENSE.*

1.

ALL the kisses taken, given
By a woman, once I thought
From of old were fixed by heaven
And with Destiny inwrought.

So I kissed, and, with the kissing,
Was as earnest and as true
As if fear might be of missing
What was laid on me to do.

As with other things, I know now
There are kisses and to spare;
So I take the kiss and go now,
Light of heart and debonair.

2.

'Twas at the corner of the street,
We stood an hour and over;—
Discussed the tender bond of souls
'Twixt lover dear and lover.

And still we stood a hundred times
  Our love with speeches proving;
'Twas by the corner of the street;—
  We never thought of moving.

The Goddess of Occasion then—
  A merry wench beguiling—
Came briskly up to where we stood,
  And flitted past us smiling.

3.

In dreams I dream when waking,
  And in waking thoughts by night,
In my soul your lovely laughter
  Rings always for delight.

You remember Montmorency's,—
  How you rode a donkey, gay,
Till you fell from off the saddle,
  And in the thistles lay?

The donkey munched the thistles,
  The donkey did not fret—
And ah! Your lovely laughter
  I never shall forget.

4.

(*She speaks.*)

In a lovely garden growing,
Hangs an apple on a tree;
And, about the bough, a serpent
Coils him lithely, and I see
Serpent-eyes that glimmer softly
And that hold me; in the hiss
I can hear a golden promise
That allures like sweetest bliss.

(*The other speaks.*)

'Tis the fruit of life, this apple;
Taste its sweetness—only taste,
That the time you have for living
Run not utterly to waste.
Tender dove and beauteous maiden,
Taste it quick and unafraid—
'Tis your wise old cousin's counsel,
You may trust what she has said.

5.

I have tuned anew my cithern,
New the melodies I sing.
Old the text is! "Woman's bitter."—
So said Solomon the king.

She'll deceive her lover surely,
As her husband in the past;
And the drops are only wormwood,
In love's golden bowl at last.

Do the Scriptures tell us true, then,
When the story they rehearse,
How the serpent drew upon you
First your dark and awful curse?

On its belly still the serpent
Lurks in every grove for harm,
And you hearken to his whisper,
Yielding softly to the charm.

Ah, how cold and dark! The ravens
Croak and circle to and fro
Round the sun; and love and gladness,
They were buried long ago.

6.

Your lying promise of delight
  Deceived not long my heart;
Like a deceitful dream of night,
  You came but to depart.

The morning broke, the mists dissolved
  Before the shining sun;
We were already at the end
  Ere we had well begun.

## CLARISSA.

1.

WHEN I offer love the truest,
You are troubled and decline it;
But you straightly fall to weeping,
If as "no" I should divine it.

I have seldom prayed—so hear me,
God Almighty! Help this maid;
Of Thy grace her brain enlighten;
May her pretty tears be stayed!

2.

Where you go you always see me,
Always see me, your pursuer;
And the worse I am entreated,
I but cling to you the truer.

Pretty scorn in bondage holds me,
Just as kindness will remove me.
Would you really send me flying,
It but needs that you should love me.

3.

Devil take your cruel parents,
Take your father, take your mother,
In the theatre who hindered
Us from seeing one another!

Broad in finery they sat there;
Scarce a loophole could I find
For espying you, beloved,
In the box concealed behind.

On the ruin of two lovers
Calm they gazed with tranquil eye,
And they clapped immense approval
When they saw the lovers die.

4.

Through the naughty quarters go not—
Streets that pretty eyes are bright'ning.
Ah! too kindly they will spare you
Hint of peril from their lightning.

From the lofty windows smiling,
Eyes will fall on you and greet you:
Eyes so friendly (Death and Devil!),
Like a sister's they will meet you.

Vain the struggle: you're already
On the way; a load of sorrow
You'll return with on your bosom,
That will last for many a morrow.

5.

Now, when fairest is the summer,
Wounded deep, and sick and ailing,
To the wood, a lonely comer,
I have borne my bitter wailing.

Birds around, in pity vying,
Hush their song my woe to hearken,
And the wind my plaint is sighing,
Where the linden branches darken.

And I grieve where I am seated
In the hushed and grassy hollow.
"Ah, my kitten!" Soft repeated
By the hills, the echoes follow.

"Kitten, kitten, winsome kitten!
Why hast wounded me so badly?
Ah, thy tiger claws have smitten
Deep my heart, and torn it sadly!

"For believe, my heart sincerely
Long was closed to love's beguiling,
Till I loved again too dearly,
Saw and loved your pretty smiling.

"Sweet and low you seemed to mew it:
'You'll be neither scratched nor bitten,
Only trust; you will not rue it;
I am such a gentle kitten.'"

* * *

6.

In the woods her wild sweet measure
Philomela careless sings;
But you needs must find your pleasure
In canaries—fluttering things!

In their cage I watch you feed them,
Pretty tame and yellow folk;
For their sugared morsel pleading,
At your finger see them poke.

To the angels must the beauty
Of a scene like this be dear!
'Tis so touching that, in duty,
I myself must shed a tear!

7.

The spring has come with wedding gifts,
With music and rejoicing,
Congratulations to the bride
And to the bridegroom voicing.

It brings the jasmin, violets,
Sweet herbs, the rose in pride, too;
It brings the bridegroom celery,
Asparagus for the bride, too.

8.

Guard you God from overheating,
And your heart from palpitation;
Keep you safe from overeating,
And excessive perspiration!

Love, so warm this marriage morning,
May the years of wedlock nourish:
May it never turn to scorning;
And your bodies, may they flourish!

9.

Gentle maiden, on my case
You can now decide with right:
"Of a truth the man is base,
He would vex me just for spite;—

"Me who never spoke a word
That could possibly offend him;
Who, if blame he had incurred,
Would so zealously befriend him—

"Me, who went so far, in fact,
That I might have loved him dearly,
Had he but contrived to act
Less insanely, more sincerely!"

10.

How you mock and sulk and snarl,
When by jealous fancy bit!
How you writhe for spite and anger,
Though you love me not a whit!

Roses red, you will not smell them,
Will not kiss the fragrant rose;
But you sniff among the briars
Till you scratch your foolish nose.

11.

Too late, alas! your pretty smiling,
Your tender sighs, alas! too late!
For buried long is now the passion
You treated once with scorn and hate.

Too late, alas! is love's returning,
These loving looks, too late to save!
Upon my heart they fall as fruitless
As sunshine falling on a grave.

. . . . . .

Ah, if I only knew where sojourn
Our souls at last, from life released!
Where is the fire to ashes fallen?
Where are the winds that blew and ceased?

## *YOLANTE AND MARY.*

1.

How the poets should be honoured,
Well these ladies understand;
Self and genius they invited
To a luncheon they had planned.

Ah! how excellent the soup was,
How restorative the wine!
And how well the hare was larded,
And the chicken, how divine!

I believe we talked of poetry;
And, when satisfied at last,
For the honour great I thanked them
They had shown by their repast.

2.

Which of the two to fall in love with?
So amiable are both, and kind!
The mother's still a handsome woman;
The daughter's fair and to my mind.

So moving to behold, the form is,
That still is innocent and white!
The genial eye is also charming,
That reads one's tenderness at sight.

My heart our hoary friend resembles
Who stands, in contemplative zest,
Between two bundles of his fodder,
Uncertain which will taste the best.

3.

Plain the tricolor of flowers
That you wear upon your breast
Says, "This heart is free, nor cowers
In the chains the free detest."

Mary, monarch of my heart,
Fourth of Maries it has owned,
Many queens that played your part,
In disgrace have been dethroned.

4.

The bottles are empty, the breakfast was good,
The ladies are rosy and pleased.
They have drunk just a little more wine than they should:
Their bodices boldly they've eased.

Their bosoms and shoulders are fair, I can vouch;
My heart is a-flutter with fright,
As, laughing, they throw themselves down on the couch;
The counterpane hides them from sight.

Before them, for comfort, the curtains they pull,
They snore for a wager, in fact.
I gaze on the couch, left alone, like a fool,
Perplexed as to how I should act.

5.

Courage quickens now that, daily,
Youth recedes and grows more dim,
And my bolder arm now gaily
Circles many a waist more slim.

Some have listened, shocked, demurely,
Who have yielded all the same;
Flattery has conquered surely
Lovely scorn and timid shame.

Yet the best—I mark it wondering—
Triumph holds for me no more.
Can it be the sweet and blundering
Asininity of yore?

## JENNY.

My years now number five-and-thirty,
And scarce fifteen for you have sped. . .
But, when I gaze on you, O Jenny,
A dream awakes that long was dead!

In eighteen hundred and seventeen, dear,
I saw a maiden wondrous fair;
Her manner and her form were yours, dear,
And just like you she wore her hair.

I was about to start for college,
And pleaded with her, "Wait for me,
'Twill soon be time for my returning."
She said, "My joy is all in thee."

At Göttingen the law I studied;
Three years had passed since I began;
Then came the news, my faithless sweetheart
Was married to another man.

Spring smiled in every field and valley:
It was the first of May, and glad
The birds were singing in the sunshine,
Not even the meanest worm was sad.

But, as for me, my strength forsook me;
Ailing I grew, and sick and white;
And only God knows what I suffered
Through the long watches of the night.

Yet I recovered; and my health now
Is sturdy as an oak's and strong . . .
But when I gaze on you, O Jenny,
That dream awakes, forgotten long!

## *EMMA.*

1.

He stands as stiff as a tree trunk,
In frost and wind and heat;
His arms are skyward lifted,
Rooted in earth his feet.

Bagíratha, self-tormented
Thus stands, until his woe
Moves Brahma, from high heaven
To bid the Ganges flow.

But I, beloved, suffer
My martyrdom in vain;
From the heaven of your eyes, dear,
There falls no healing rain.

2.

Four-and-twenty weary hours yet,
Till my rapture is complete—
Rapture, that with sidelong glances,
Lovely eyes have promised sweet.

What a clumsy thing a word is,
And how poor is speech alone!
Blurt it out, and, flitting past you,
Lo! the butterfly is flown.

But a look is vast and boundless:
At a look the lover's breast
Can become a starry heaven,
Heaven infinite and blest!

3.

Not a kiss, though months are over
Since I saw and loved you first!
Poorest among men you leave me,
Leave me standing, mouth athirst.

Once was happiness so nigh me,
I could feel it breathing sweetly.
But my lips it held aloof from—
Held aloof, and passed discreetly.

4.

Emma, tell, and tell me truly,
Was it love that made me silly?
Or, because I was so silly,
Did the love but follow duly?

By my passion even, Emma,
  By my lovers' madness even,
  I'm tormented less and troubled,
Than I am by this dilemma.

5.

Jar and wrangle, waste of breath!
  When together, always strife!
  So I go, and find that life
Life no longer is, but death.

Night is spent in wonder sad
  Whether death or hell the worse is;
  Ah! I think my torment's curse is
That already I am mad.

6.

Hateful night with shadows dreary
  Steals upon us, furtive, wan,
And our souls are sick and weary;
  Heavy-eyed we gaze and yawn.

You grow old, and I grow older:
  Dead our spring, and fallen its bloom;
You grow cold, and I grow colder,
  While the winter nears with gloom.

Ah, the last is always sorrow!
Love's sweet sigh is but a breath;
Loveless sighs will come to-morrow,
And the end of life is death.

## *KITTY.*

1.

Eyes of beauty, long forgotten,
Once again ensnare and bind me;
Once again a maiden's glances,
As of old, bewitch and blind me.

Back to vanished days that beckon,
Loving lips have kissed me sweetly:
When by day I swam in folly,
And at night was drowned completely.

2.

That you in secret love me well,
My vanity assures me;
My judgment says, because your heart
Is generous, it endures me.

In honour you would hold the man
Whom others underrate so,
And doubly kind would be to him
Whom others wound and hate so.

You are so friendly and so fair!
So soft your arm encloses!
Your words, that sweet as music ring,
Are fragrant as the roses.

A star of heaven you seem to me,
In shades of night who languish:
A star whose greeting glads the night,
And sweetens all my anguish.

3.

Fair gleams the sun that sinks in glory,
Yet fairer are those eyes of thine;
Those eyes of thine and the sunset glory
Into my heart so sadly shine!

"Farewell" the red of eve betokens:
Night for the heart, and bitter woe.
Between thine eyes and my heart that loves them,
Soon wide the sundering sea will flow.

4.

Her letter well may move me:
She writes that she sincerely,
Beyond all speech, so dearly,
For evermore will love me.

The days are dull, with yearning
  Both heart and bosom ache—
  "To England, for my sake,
Ah! hasten your returning."

5.

My ship towards the mark
  Speeds like a mountain goat,
  Now up the Thames we float,
Now we're at Regent's Park.

'Tis there that dwells my Kitty,
  The girl that I delight in;
  There's not a skin so white in
The West End or the City.

She knows I'm almost due,
  So she up and fills the kettle,
  And forward wheels the settle;
I come, and there's tea for two.

6.

The joy that kissed me yesterday
  Endures not till to-morrow,
'Tis long since any loved me true:
  I know it to my sorrow.

There have been those who seemed to love,
When curious they were only:
Who, when at last they saw my heart,
Have fled and left me lonely.

The one would pale before she went,
The other laugh to grieve me;
But only Kitty wept for woe
When it was time to leave me.

# TANNHÄUSER.

# TANNHÄUSER.

## *A LEGEND.*

(1836.)

I.

Good Christians all, avoid the snare
When Satan's guile entices!
I'll sing you the Tannhäuser song,
To warn from his devices.

Tannhäuser was a warrior bold,
Who, loves delight pursuing,
Dwelt seven years in the Venusberg,
Seven years to his undoing.

"O Venus, mistress fond and fair,
My love, my life, farewell now!
For, with your leave, I fain would go—
No longer here would dwell now."

"Tannhäuser, noble knight, this day
You have withheld your kisses.
O kiss me quick, and tell me true,
If aught in me amiss is.

"The wine that day by day I pour:
Say, sweet have you not found it?
And day by day, with roses red,
Your head, have I not crowned it?"

"O Venus, mistress fond and fair,
Of your wine so sweet in flavour,
Of your kisses warm, my soul is sick—
Some sourness I would savour.

"Jested and laughed too long have we:
I yearn for weeping bitter;
I want no roses for my head—
A crown of thorns were fitter."

"Tannhäuser, good and noble knight,
With cruel words you grieve me;
You have promised me a thousand times
That you would never leave me.

"Come, let us to our chamber go,
And taste again love's gladness;
My lovely body, lily-white,
Will chase away your sadness."

"O Venus, mistress fond and fair,
Your charm will never perish;
As men have loved you in the past,
They still will love and cherish.

"Yea, when I think upon the Gods
And Heroes who have lusted
After your body lily-white,
My soul recoils disgusted.

"Your lovely body lily-fair
Well-nigh my soul affright will,
If I but think how many more
Your beauty yet delight will."

"Tannhäuser, noble knight and good,
You shall not thus accuse me;
O liefer were I beaten sore,
As you were wont to use me.

"Yea, liefer were I beaten sore,
Than that such words were spoken,
Or that by you, a Christian cold,
My pride of heart were broken.

"Because I have too fondly loved,
I hearken while you chide now;
Farewell, I give you leave to go:
Myself the door throw wide now."

2.

In Rome, in Rome, in the holy town,
They are tolling from every steeple;
The procession with ringing and singing goes:
The Pope in the midst of his people.

'Tis the pious Urban who passes along,
The triple crown he's wearing;—
He is clad in his purple robe of state,
The barons his train upbearing.

"O holy Father, Urban, hear!
A sinful tale to tell is;
Thou shalt not move another step,
Till saved my soul from hell is."

The folk, they fall in a circle back,
Hushed are the anthems holy;
"Who is the pilgrim wan and wild,
That kneels to the Pope so lowly?"

"O holy Father, Urban, thou
Canst bind and loose from evil;
Deliver me now from the pains of hell,
And the power of the Devil.

"I am Tannhäuser, the noble knight,
Who, love's delight pursuing,
Dwelt seven years in the Venusberg,
Seven years to his undoing.

"A lovely woman Venus is,
With many a grace to charm one;
Like sunshine and the scent of flowers,
Her voice can soothe and warm one.

"As the butterfly, fluttering, sips from the cup
Of the fragrant flower posies,
So flutters my soul for ever round
Her lips as red as roses.

"Her blooming curls flow dark and free,
Her noble face enwreathing;
Her great eyes, when they gaze on you,
Will almost stop your breathing.

"Ah, if her eyes but gaze on you,
A captive fond you languish!
To win away from the mount at last
Has cost me bitter anguish.

"Yea, though I now am won away,
Still shine her eyes and yearn there;
The eyes of the woman follow me,
And beckon to return there.

"By day I am a sorry ghost;
My life awakens nightly;
For by night I dream of my mistress fair:
She sits by me laughing lightly.

"So whole of heart she laughs, and gay,
Her teeth like pearls peeping!
If on her laughter I but think,
I straight must fall a-weeping.

"I love her with a boundless love,
Nothing will stay its urging;
'Tis like a swirling cataract,
You cannot stem its surging.

"From rock to rock it leaps and foams:
The thunder-voices roar on;
If it broke its neck a thousand times,
The mighty flood would pour on.

"To Venus I would gladly give,
Were it mine, the whole of heaven;
I would give her sun, I would give her the moon,
And all the stars of even.

"I love her with a mighty love,
With flames that burn and consume me—
Are these already the quenchless fires
To which I feared to doom me?

"O holy Father, Urban, thou
Canst bind and loose from evil;
Deliver me from the pains of hell,
And the power of the Devil."

In sorrow the Pope has raised his hands,
In sorrow he has spoken:
"Tannhäuser, thou unhappy man,
The spell may not be broken.

"The Devil that is Venus named,
Of all the fiends the worst is;
The man she holds in her lovely claws
For evermore accurst is.

"For the lust of the flesh thy soul must pay,
Must pay the bitter cost now;
Thou art damned to hell's eternal woe:
Thou art for ever lost now."

3.

Tannhäuser, the knight, he walked so fast,
That his wounded feet were bleeding;
'Twas midnight when, at the Venusberg,
He stayed at last his speeding.

Venus awakened from out her sleep,
And blithe from her couch upspringing,
Round her lover she threw her milk-white arms,
And held him, closely clinging.

Down from her nose the red blood ran,
Her eyes with tears gushed over;
The tears and blood besmeared the face,
And wet the cheek of her lover.

The knight awearied sank on the bed,
Ere a single word was spoken;
To cook in the kitchen Venus went,
That his fast might straight be broken.

She gave him soup and she gave him bread;
Herself his wounds washed featly;
His matted hair she brushed and combed,
And laughed the while full sweetly.

"Tannhäuser, noble knight, 'tis long
Since you left me, and wandered forth, now;
O where have you been this weary while—
In what land of the south or the north, now?"

"'Twas in Italy, my Venus fair,
That business made me tarry;
From Rome I have returned as fast
As hasting feet would carry.

"O Rome is built on seven hills,
Beside the Tiber River.
I saw the Pope, who mentioned you,
And said, 'My greetings give her.'

"Through Florence I passed on my homeward way,
And Milan. Then I started
To climb the heights of Switzerland,
Light-footed, eager-hearted.

"Over the Alps I toiled apace,
And there the snow was falling;
The lakes of azure laughed to me,
The eagles hoarse were calling.

"'Neath the care of six-and-thirty kings
Lay Germany, like a dotard,
Snoring in happy peace below
Where I stood, on the Mount Saint Gothard.

"I saw the Swabian poet-school—
That set of darling ninnies;
They sat in a row with guards on their heads,
So careful each of his skin is.

"At Frankfort I stopped a while at Schwabb's,
And the famous dumplings ate there;
For religion the folk are far renowned,
And the giblets are first-rate there.

"A dog, who was once of the better sort,
I saw at Dresden, sadly;—
Too aged now to bark at all,
His teeth he misses badly.

"At Weimar, the widowed muses' seat,
A voice to sorrow giving,
They wept because Goethe, alas! was dead,
And Eckermann was living.

"At Potsdam I heard a deafening din,
And asked them what the cause was,
For Gans, who read them at Berlin
Last century's tale, the applause was.

"At Göttingen learning blooms apace,
Though scanty fruit 'tis bearing;
No light I spied as I passed it through,
In the murky midnight faring.

"The bridewell I saw at Zell was used
For Hanoverians purely.
O Germans, a national gaol and whip,
Were meet for Germany surely!

"At Hamburg I asked—I was fain to know—
Why the streets so vilely stank there.
And Jews and Christians answered, both,
'Twas the river was to thank there.

"In Hamburg, in the city good,
O many a rascal strange was!
I thought I was back in the gaol at Zell,
When it merely the Exchange was.

"From Hamburg I went to Altona:
The neighbourhood is pleasant;
You shall hear of that another time;
Let this suffice for the present."

## SONGS OF CREATION.

I.

FIRST of all God made the sun,
Then the stars that nightly shine;
By the sweat of His own brow,
Fashioned next the gentle kine.

Then He made the savage beasts—
Lions with their claws so grim,
And, in likeness of the lion,
Formed the kitten soft and slim.

Next, the wilderness to people,
He from dust created man,
And the interesting monkey,
Fashioned on the same good plan.

'How He copies His own work,"
Jeered the Devil with a laugh;
"In the likeness of the oxen
He will make, in time, the calf!"

2.

To the Devil spake the Lord thus:
Answered Satan and his laugh:
"True, the stars the sun resemble;
From the ox I made the calf;

"Like the lions, maned and clawed,
Are the kittens, dainty-pawed;
After man I formed the ape;
But there's nothing you can shape.

3.

"The lions, the oxen, man, and the sun,
I made to glorify my might.
But the stars, calves, kittens, apes, each one,
I fashioned for my own delight.

4.

"When the work of Creation I began,
In seven days it was concluded;
But over the shaping of the plan
A thousand æons I had brooded.

"The work itself is merely motion:
Short time it takes to make or miss;
The plan's the *crux*—the original notion—
That shows you who the artist is.

"Three centuries passed before I saw
How fashioned for the best might be
The learned doctor of the law,
Yea, even the humble little flea."

5.

On the sixth day said the Lord,
"Now my labour is complete.
Vast and fair, the whole Creation
Is accomplished as was meet.

"See the sun, how red and golden
On the ocean falls his sheen!
And the trees, how bright their verdure!—
Almost like a painted scene.

"Are the lambkins on the meadow
Not as white as alabaster?
When so natural is Nature,
Does it not proclaim the Master?

"Now fulfilled are, with my glory,
Earth and heaven, moon and sun;
Man shall magnify and praise me
While the endless ages run!

6.

"You find not the stuff whereof poems are wrought
By sucking the finger merely;
Neither God nor singer can fashion from naught
His world, his poem, clearly.

"From the ancient mud of æons dim
Was man in pride created:
Out of the rib I took from him,
With lovely woman mated.

"I shaped the heavens from the earth,
Angels from women moulded;
'Tis the form that gives the substance worth,
By the artist's hand unfolded.

7.

"The reason why I made at all
This world so glorious, would you learn?
Within my soul there seemed to burn
A flaming and resistless call.

"'Twas sickness at the last which lured
My hand to the stupendous deed.
Creation satisfied my need;
Creation ended, I was cured."

## *FREDERICA.*

(1823.)

I.

O LEAVE Berlin: the thick and dreary sand,
Weak tea, and over-witty folk who show
How well the world, themselves, and God they know,
And with Hegelian insight understand!
O fly with me to India's sunny land,
Where sandal-buds afar their perfume throw,
And, festal-robed, toward the Ganges go
White pilgrim hordes, in many a prayerful band!—

Where waves the palm by water smiling sweet,
Where yearns the lotus by the sacred shore
To Indra's citadel, the eternal blue.
There will I fall devoutly at your feet,
And, pressing them, will cry while I adore,
"Lady, of women all, the fairest, you!"

2.

The Ganges roars; from the green shadows stare
  The bright-eyed antelopes, that lightly fling
  And gallop past; the strutting peacocks swing
And flaunt the jewelled feathers that they wear.
Flowers you never saw are blooming there:
  Deep from the heart of sunny meads they spring;
  With voice love-drunken doth Cocila sing,
"Beyond all other women you are fair!"

God Cama peeps and smiles from out your face,
  His home is in your bosom's tent of white,
    He breathes from you, in songs of sweetness welling.
Vassant upon your dewy lips I trace;
  Within your eyes I find new worlds of light—
    Too narrow now the old world for my dwelling.

3.

The Ganges roars tumultuous and hoarse;
  Their vesper-gold the Himalayas wear;
  From the dark banyan groves, with sudden blare,
The trampling elephants a pathway force—
Oh, for an image! I would give my horse
  To find some image for your beauty rare,
  Who are incomparably pure and fair,
And of my heart's delight the radiant source!

You see me seek for images in vain,
And watch me strive with passion and with rhyme,—
And only smile to see me so undone!
But smile! For, when you smile, Gandarvas fain
Reach for their citherns sweet, and sing and chime,
High in the golden chambers of the sun.

# CATHERINE.

I.

UPON my night has risen a lovely star
That smiles and whispers comfort from afar:
"The herald of new life am I"—
Ah, do not lie!

For, as the sea swells upward to the moon,
My raptured soul toward the gracious boon
Of thy dear light must surge and sigh—
Ah, do not lie!

2.

"Would you be presented duly?"
In my ear the duchess said.—
"Nay, my courage fails, for, truly,
I've already lost my head."

I cannot look on her unshaken!
When she is nigh, I seem to know
That life anew for me must waken,
With olden bliss and olden woe.

I turn from her affrighted even,
But longing holds when I would flee.
Like stars of fate in a stormy heaven,
Her lovely eyes shine out on me.

Her brow's serene. But, to confound me,
The future lightnings gather there:
The coming storm, that soon around me
Will beat, and bring my soul despair.

The mouth is gentle, but with terror
Beneath the rose I mark, forlorn,
The snake that soon will prove my error
With faithless kiss, with lovely scorn.

Sweet perilous spot! I needs must near her—
Longing compels—I have no choice—
Already I have turned, and hear her—
Like flame and music is her voice.

She asks, and sets my heart a-flutter,
"Sir, who was singing?" I recall
My foolish wits enough to stutter,
"I did not hear the song at all."

3.

Now like Merlin, fond magician,
I am powerless at last:
In the magic circle fast,
That I wove to my perdition.

I am bound, and lying lowly
At her feet, and evermore
Looking upward I adore,
While the hours are drifting slowly.

Hours, and days, and weeks, unbroken—
Like a dream they drift and go.
What I read I hardly know:
Hardly know what she has spoken.

And I fancy oft, in yearning,
That her lips are laid on mine—
In my soul a flame divine
Kindles then to raptured burning.

4.

Quite heavenly I thought the day,
With the evening just as pleased was;
The wine was good and Kitty was fair,
And my heart still unappeased was.

Her rosy lips bewildered me,
So fond and wild their wooing;
Her dear brown eyes, they gazed and smiled
So tender, warm and cooing.

She held me fast, and, at the last,
I fled by cunning only;
About her hands I bound her hair,
And left her sitting lonely.

5.

You lie in my arms so gladly,
On my heart so fain you rest!
You are my dearest star, love,
I am your heaven blest.

Below us swarm in their folly
The children of men; for spite
They cry and rage and quarrel,
And each alone is right.

They go with their fool's caps ringing,
With needless gibes and frowns;
They go with their clubs a-swinging,
And crack each other's crowns.

Ah, well for us, beloved,
  That we sit so safe and far—
You hide within its heaven
  Your head, my dearest star!

6.

It is true our souls will ever
  Cling in close Platonic union,
And that strong against destruction
  Is the spirit's pure communion.

Yes, and even were they parted,
  They would surely come together,
For the soul has wings that light are
  As the butterfly's swift feather.

And, besides, they are immortal,
  And Eternity's enduring,
And who seeks, with time for seeking,
  Needs must finish by securing.

But the bodies suffer sorely
  When they part from those they cherish,
And, instead of wings for flying,
  They've a pair of legs, and perish.

So bethink thee, lovely Kitty,
And be wise. Till April weather
Stay in France, and we will travel
Back to England, gay together.

7.

When the nightingale was singing,
And the rose was sweet and young,
Thou wert here to kiss and hold me,
And our hearts together clung.

Now that autumn strips the roses,
And the nightingale is flown,
Thou hast spread thy wings and followed,
And I linger here alone.

Dark and chill the nights are growing—
Ah, how long wilt thou delay?
Must I only dream for ever
Of a joy that's passed away?

8.

I love a tender soul thus housed
Within a body white and fair:
Great fearless eyes, and forehead wreathed
With heavy clouds of shadowy hair!

You are so right in every way;
What I have sought in every land!
Besides, your worth enables you
So well my worth to understand!

You've found in me the man you need,
And, for a time, will fully pay
With love's delight, and kisses fond—
And then, as usual, betray.

9.

Spring stood with welcome at the door,
A gay and smiling warden;
The land, bedecked with blossoms o'er,
Is like a flower garden.

The carriage speeds apace and flies,
Beside me sits my treasure;
Her heart, I feel it beat; her eyes
Are soft with love and pleasure.

And it's oh, the trill and the scented sun!
Green-jewelled earth, how gay!
The trees their white heads every one
For very rapture sway.

And peeping up, the flowers rejoice,
And turn their curious faces
On the lovely woman of my choice,
And on me, the man she graces.

Ah, fleeting bliss! The scythe will pass
Above the seed to-morrow;
The spring will fade; my love, alas!
Prove faithless, to my sorrow.

10.

Kitty's dying! I can see
How her cheek grows pale and paler;
Yet, ah, miserable me!
I must leave her now and fail her.

Kitty's dying! and her bed
Will be soon the churchyard cold;
And she knows it! Yet, for each,
She is thoughtful as of old.

And she begs, this coming winter,
To protect me from its harm,
I will wear the lamb's-wool stockings
She has knitted for me warm.

11.

The yellow woodland shivers,
And sheds its leafy bloom;
So all that's lovely passes,
And sinks into the tomb.

Around the tree-tops sadly
A wistful radiance glows;
It may be summer kissing
Farewell before she goes.

And from my soul, for sorrow,
I'm fain to weep and sigh;
The scene recalls so clearly
The hour we said good-bye.

Alas! I had to leave thee
With cruel death so near,
I was the parting summer,
And thou the woodland sere.

12.

In a dream of late I dreamed
That I walked abroad in heaven,
Walked with thee—for heaven without thee
Were a hell and not a heaven.

There I saw the just, the chosen,
Saw the good men and the righteous,
Such as mortified their bodies
To insure their souls' salvation!

Early Fathers and Apostles,
Hooded friars, hermits holy;
Queer old fellows, young ones also—
Young ones uglier than the old ones!

Long and pious were their faces,
Broad their tonsures, grey their beards
(For some Jews were of the number),
And they passed us frowning sternly;

Passed without so much as glancing,
Though so fond, my lovely sweetheart,
Thou wert hanging on my arm,
Flirting, laughing, and coquetting.

There was only one among them
Who regarded thee with favour:
Only one, the only fair one,
And his face was very noble.

On his lips was human kindness,
Peace divine was in his eye;
As upon the Magdalene once,
So he gazed on thee in pity.

Ah! I know that well he meant it:
There is none so pure and holy—
Yet my heart was sorely troubled,
With a jealous pang was smitten—

And alas! I must confess
That in heaven I grew uneasy:
Incommoded, God forgive me!
By our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

13.

On holiday they all come flaunting
With pretty sweethearts for delight,
And frolic in the blossoming night;—
I walk alone; the best is wanting.

An ailing man, I wander lonely;
I flee the mirth, the dancing feet,
The shining lamp, the music sweet;—
I think of England only.

I pluck the rose, and know not whither
Its budding beauty to bestow;
Musing I walk and full of woe—
My heart and the roses wither.

14.

For many a day, too sad for singing,
I grieved, but now the numbers throng;
Like sudden tears from anguish springing,
With sudden music comes the song.

Melodious measures plaintive weaving,
I sing of love and mightier woe,
Of hearts that bring each other grieving,
Yet break when they asunder go.

Often I hear, in fancy swaying,
The German oaks above my head;
Low words of welcome they are saying—
It is a dream—and they have fled.

Often I hear, in fancy singing,
The old, the German nightingales—
How sweet their songs about me ringing!—
It is a dream—the music fails.

Where are the roses that, like lovers,
Once gladdened me?—Their bloom is shed!—
Ah! sad and ghostly still there hovers
Within my soul the fragrance dead.

## *ABROAD.*

I.

FROM place to place, you know not why,
You haste with hurrying feet.
A gentle word the breezes sigh;
You turn in wonder sweet.

The dear one that you left behind
Has called you soft and low:
"In thee alone my joy I find;
Come back, I love thee so!"

But further, further, driven and tost,
You needs must haste and flee;
What you so dearly loved and lost,
You nevermore shall see.

2.

"Oh, the dear, delightful singer!
And his songs, how sweet their burden!
Were he only here beside us,
Many a kiss would be his guerdon!"

But while dear, delightful ladies
Thus are thinking, I, the loved,
In a foreign land am pining,
Quite a hundred miles removed.

In the North it helps one little
That there's sunshine in the South;
Nor can hungry hearts grow fat on
Kisses promised to the mouth.

3.

I dreamed of a child with braided hair:
I thought we sat together
'Neath the lindens green, when the nights were fair
And blue in the summer weather.

O, fond were we, and we kissed for love,
And we talked of love and pain,
Till the yellow stars sighed soft above,
For envy of us twain.

From dreams I wake, I gaze around,
I am alone, 'tis night.
The shining stars, they make no sound,
Nor heed me on their height.

4.

I have not known thee of thy cheer
So sad for long, so sorrow-bowed;
Adown thy cheek there steals a tear,
And frequent are thy sighs and loud.

Say, are thy thoughts in yearning turned
Where, far in mist, thy home doth stand?
Confess that thou hast often yearned
For thy beloved Fatherland.

Dost think of her who in the past
With pretty petulance beguiled?
How grieved wert thou, till, at the last,
With laughter you were reconciled.

Dost think upon thy comrades true,
Who in the hour of rapture fell
Upon thy neck—when stormy grew
Thy heart with thoughts too deep to tell?

Upon thy mother dost thou think?
Thy sister? Dear to both wert thou.
Thy courage high begins to sink,
Thy reckless mood to melt, I trow.

Dost think upon the trees that grew—
The birds—within that garden fair,
When love's young dream was sweet and new:
The hope of love, and love's despair?

The hour is late, and wan doth shine
The pallid night with melting snow.
And I, alas! must dress me fine,
And forth into the world must go.

5.

O I had once a beauteous Fatherland.
High used to seem
The oak—so high!—the violets nodded kind.
It was a dream.

In German I was kissed, in German told
(You scarce would deem
How sweetly rang the words): "I love thee well!"
It was a dream.

## *TRAGEDY.*

1.

O FLY with me and be my wife,
And rest forever on my heart!
My heart will be thy Fatherland,
Thy father's house, where'er thou art.

O come! or I must perish here,
And thou be left alone, forlorn—
A stranger and an exile drear,
Within the house where thou wert born.

2.

(*A genuine folk-song which Heine claims to have heard on the Rhine.*)

There fell a frost one night of spring
Upon the little flowers blue;
They shrivelled and they faded.

There was a youth who loved a maid;
They fled in secret from the house,
Unknown to father, mother.

They wandered here, they wandered there,
But they had neither luck nor joy,
And so, uncherished, perished.

3.

Upon the grave a linden grows,
There sing the birds, the night wind blows;
And underneath, upon the grass,
The miller's lad sits with his lass.

The winds, they wail so soft and drear,
So sweet the birds, so sad to hear,
The lovers hush their talk and sigh:
They weep, themselves they know not why.

# SONGS.

I.

Ah, the symmetry how dainty
Of the limbs uprearing slender!
On the little neck, how charming
Of the lovely head the poise is!

Half alluring, half pathetic
Is the face, whereon the glances
Of a woman mingle warmly
With a child's unsullied laughter.

Were there not upon thy shoulders
Here and there, like sombre shadows,
Of the dust of earth some traces,
I should liken thee to Venus—

To the goddess Aphrodite,
Rising lovely from the ocean,
Sweetly blooming, fair and shining,
And, I need not mention, clean.

2.

"Eyes, ye lovely stars that perish!"
So the little song went ringing
That in Tuscany I heard once,
By the sea, a maiden singing.

'Twas a little maid that sang it,
By the sea her net she mended;
And she gazed until I kissed her:
To her mouth of roses bended.

When I saw you I remembered
Song and net and sea of glory—
I must stoop and kiss you also,
Just to finish off the story.

3.

'Tis a love-song ringing purely,
All I think and feel and sigh.
Ah! the God of Love must surely
Have a finger in the pie.

In my bosom he's conductor;
To his time my heart must beat;
All I think and feel, already
He has set to music sweet.

4.

What do yellow roses mean?—
  Love with bitterness at strife,
  Wrath that grudges Love his life,
Love that perishes of spleen.

5.

We gaze on one another
  With laughter and with woe,
That our hearts should love so truly,
  And our heads should doubt it so.

Dost feel how fondly, darling,
  My throbbing heart entreats?
She shakes her head and whispers,
  "God knows for whom it beats!"

6.

A man, although he's happy,
  Grows tired as well, 'tis true,
When he has three lovely sweethearts,
  And his legs are only two.

I visit the first in the morning;
  I visit the second at night;
Beneath my roof the third comes
  At noon, in broad daylight.

Farewell, my three beloved ones,
Two legs are all I own;
I'll pay my court to nature,
In some sylvan spot, alone.

7.

With stupid maidens I have thought,
"These stupid maidens bore me sadly!"
But when the clever ones I sought,
I seemed to prosper just as badly.

The clever ones were far too wise:
They asked too much, I loathed their chatter;
And they would laugh, and shirk replies,
When questioned on the weightiest matter.

## THE FAITHLESS LOUISA.

THE faithless, fair Louisa
Came in with a whisper low;
There sat the wretched Ulrich
In the taper's sunken glow.

She kissed him and she cozened—
She thought to mend his cheer . . .
"My God, how you have altered,
Your laugh no more I hear!"

She kissed him and she cozened,
And at his feet she lay . . .
"My God, how cold your hands are,
The flesh has pined away!"

She kissed him and she cozened;
Again she paused and said . . .
"My God, as grey as ashes
Is the hair upon your head!"

There sat the woful Ulrich,
His heart was like to break;
He kissed his cruel sweetheart,
But not a word he spake.

# ROMANCES.

(1839–1842.)

# ROMANCES.

## (1839–1842.)

### I.

### A WOMAN.

THEY loved one another beyond belief;
She was a pickpocket, he was a thief.
When he told how his tricks had sped,
She would roll and laugh on the bed.

They spent the day in joy and jest,
By night she lay upon his breast;
When they haled him to prison, she threw
From the window a laughing adieu.

He sent her a message: "Oh, come to me!
The livelong day I call for thee;
I yearn, I faint," he said;
She laughed, and shook her head.

At six in the morning they hanged him high,
In his grave at seven they laid him by.
At eight his love laughed cheerily,
And drank her red wine merrily.

2.

## THE FESTIVAL OF SPRING.

'Tis the mournful festival of Spring!
The blooming maids, with maddened cry
And streaming hair, dishevelled fly;
In wild lament their voices ring—
"Adonis! Adonis!"

The night descends; the torches gleam.
They search the wood, that, thrilled with fear,
Re-echoes to their wailing drear,
And laughs, and weeps with sob and scream—
"Adonis! Adonis!"

The youthful form so wondrous fair
Lies wan upon the ground and dead;
His blood has stained the flowers red
And sounds of mourning fill the air:
"Adonis! Adonis!"

3.

## CHILDE HAROLD.

THERE's a dreary bark and weary
  And it's sailing black for woe;
Keeping ward round their lord,
  Sit the muffled mutes arow.

Hushed the place, bared the face,
  Of the poet dead and white;
Eyes of blue, yearning true,
  Upward still, to heaven's light.

And the deep waters weep
  Like a faëry bride forlorn;
And the hoar billows roar
  Round the bark, and break and mourn.

4.

## THE INCANTATION.

THE young Franciscan sits alone
  In the dreary cloister cell;
He reads in a book of magic, called
  *The Mastery of Hell.*

So fierce at last his longing grew,
When struck the midnight drear,
The powers of the Underworld
Pale-lipped he bade appear.

"Ye spirits! fetch me from the grave
The fairest woman dead.
If but this night she while away,
The boon were great," he said.

He conjures with the awful word;
His wish is straight allowed;
The poor dead beauty rises up
In her white and ghostly shroud.

Her frozen bosom rent with sighs,
In sorrow she has come.
She sits her down beside the monk;
They gaze and they are dumb.

## 5.

## FROM A LETTER.

(*The Sun speaks.*)

WHAT have my glances to do with thee?
'Tis the right of the sun, since time began,
To shine upon master alike and man.
I am bright, for bright I needs must be.

What have my glances to do with thee?
Get thee a wife and rear a brood;
Live as an honest German should;
Turn to thy duties and let me be.

I am bright, for bright I needs must be;
I wander in heaven to and fro,
'Tis only when weary I look below.
What have my glances to do with thee?

(*The Poet speaks.*)

That I have borne those glances flung:
The blinding charm, the flaming bliss,
The light with soul for ever young:
And have not quailed, my virtue is.

But now my gaze, that long was bold,
Is weary of its heavenward quest,
And eve her darkling veil doth fold
Around mine eyelids fain for rest.

(*Chorus of Apes.*)

We apes, we apes,
How each of us gapes
And stares at the sun,
Who, though so high, can hinder none.

(*Chorus of Frogs.*)

In the water 'tis wetter,
'Tis wetter and better
Than on the earth.
With frolic and mirth,
We delight in
The sun and his glances that brighten.

(*Chorus of Moles.*)

Was ever nonsense heard to match
This of the sun, with his glance and glow?
A genial itch is all we know,
And when we feel it—why, we scratch.

(*A Glowworm speaks.*)

How self-important is the sun,
Whose glory with the day is done.
I am not half so proud and vain,
And yet to all my splendour 's plain
By night, by night!

## 6.

## THE FLIGHT.

O'ER the sea the moon is trailing
Her silver glory wan.
A little boat comes sailing:
Two lovers sit alone.

"How pale thy cheek is growing,
Beloved and most dear!"—
"I hear the splash of rowing;
My father follows near."

"Then swim we for our life now,
Beloved and most dear!"—
"His raging cries, at strife now
With his curses, I can hear."

"Hold up thy head more boldly,
Beloved and most dear!"—
"Alas! the waves so coldly
Are thundering in my ear."

"The water surges over,
And leaden are my feet!"—
"Oh, even death, beloved,
Must in thine arms be sweet!"

## 7.

## THE UNLUCKY STAR.

BRIGHT was the star of even,
But it faded, it fell from heaven.
What is the love by poets sung?
A star, my child, in a heap of dung.

Like a mangy dog that dies,
Bestrewn with dust it lies.
The cock will crow, and the wallowing sow
Grunt where the fallen star lies now.

I would fall where the waiting flowers
Are sweet in my garden bowers;
Where oft I have longed, in the scented gloom,
For a virgin death, a fragrant tomb.

## 8.

## ANNO 1829.

GIVE me a wide and noble field,
  Where there at least is room to die!
O from this narrow huckstering world,
  Ere I am stifled, let me fly!

Their meat and drink is of the best,
And, blind as moles, they take their pleasure;
The opening in a poor-box lid
Their charity would more than measure.

Cigar in mouth, and idle hands
Stuck in their pockets, see them pass!
Their stomachs are beyond reproach—
'Tis how to stomach *them*, alas!

They deal in every spice that grows,
But roots, the sweetest, cannot quell
The putrid foulness of their souls,
That vile as rotten haddocks smell.

O had I seen some monstrous vice,
Some crime colossal, bloody, found—
Aught save these virtues, morals smug
Of twenty shillings in the pound!

Ye clouds above, O bear me forth
To Africa, to Lapland drear:
To Pomerania itself—
No matter where, if far from here!

O take me with you! But the clouds
Are far too wise to pause or heed.
For, when they travel o'er this town,
They hurry on at double speed.

## 9.

## ANNO 1839.

O GERMANY, so far, so dear,
Thy memory dims mine eye with woe!
This merry France seems sad and drear,
Her lightsome folk a burden grow.

'Tis reason only, cold and bare,
In witty Paris that is crowned—
O foolish bells! O bells of prayer!
Yonder at home how sweet ye sound!

These men how mannerly! And yet
Their courteous bow I take amiss.—
The rudeness that of old I met
Where I was born, was joy, to this.

These smiling women! For their lives
They chatter like a turning mill!
Give me the silent German wives,
That go to bed demure and still.

Here round and round in frantic chase
  Things whirl as in a dream, and move!
There all seems nailed into its place,
  And glides along the ancient groove.

The watchman's horn, I hear it blow:
  Familiar, faint, from far it hails;
The watchman's song, I hear it grow
  And mingle with the nightingale's.

Those were the poet's golden times,
  'Neath Schilda's oaks of shadowy boon;
Where once I wove my tender rhymes
  From the violet's breath and the light o' the moon.

10.

## AT DAWN.

On the Faubourg Saint Marceau
Lay, this morning, thick and heavy,
Like a clinging pearly night,
Pensive mists of dying autumn.

Like a moonbeam, filmy, fair,
Through the pearly night there wandered,
Woman-like, a gracious form
On the path, athwart my going.

Yes, she moved and vanished light,
Soft and coyly as a moonbeam.
I have never seen in France
Limbs so exquisite and slender.

Was it maybe Luna's self,
Some Endymion young and lovely
Of the Latin quarter, loth
At the peep of dawn, forsaking?

On my homeward way I mused,
"Did the Goddess think me Phœbus,
Phœbus, driver of the sun,
That she fled before my glances?"

## II.

## SIR OLAVE.

### I.

By the door of the cathedral
Stand two figures scarlet-coated,
And the king himself the one is,
And the other is the headsman.

Says the monarch to the headsman,
"From the hymn the priests are singing
Seem the nuptials to be over—
Let thy goodly axe be ready."

Peal of bells and roll of organ;
Stream of folk from out the minster;
Festal-robed in the procession
Move the lovers newly wedded.

Spectre-pale, and sad, and fearful,
Is the monarch's lovely daughter;
Bold and debonair, Sir Olave,
And his rosy mouth is smiling.

Gay he greets the gloomy monarch
With his smiling mouth and rosy:
"Father freshly won, good morrow;
Forfeit duly is my head now.

"Since to-day I surely perish,
Let me live—ah, live!—till midnight,
That, with feast and torchlight dancing,
I may celebrate my wedding.

"Let me live till drained and empty
Is the last of all the goblets;
Let me dance till dance is over—
Let me live and love till midnight!"

Spake the king then to the headsman,
"To our son-in-law a respite
Until midnight be accorded—
Let thy goodly axe be ready."

II.

At his wedding feast Sir Olave sups;
He drains the last of all his cups.
Upon his shoulder lies
His wife and sighs—
By the door the headsman is standing.

The dance begins; by the torches' blaze
Sir Olave clasps his bride, nor stays
His foot till, wild and fast,
They have danced their last—
By the door the headsman is standing.

The fiddles strike up so merry and glad,
The flutes, they sigh and grieve so sad!
The watchers gaze with woe,
As they come and go—
By the door the headsman is standing.

And, as they dance to the music's cheer,
Sir Olive stoops and whispers drear,
"The half of my love is untold,
And the grave is so cold"—
By the door the headsman is standing.

III.

Sir Olave, 'tis the midnight hour;
Thy life is sped and over!
Thou hast enticed a prince's child
To take thee for her lover.

The priests, they murmur the funeral mass,
The man in scarlet's ready;
He stands beside the sombre block,
And holds his good axe steady.

Sir Olave steps to the court adown,
Where the gleaming lights and swords are:
His rosy mouth is smiling gay,
And gay as his mouth his words are:

"I bless the sun, I bless the moon,
And I bless the stars of even;
I also bless the little birds
That pipe in the blue of heaven.

"I bless the sea, I bless the land,
And the flowers upon the meadow;
The violets too, for, like my bride's,
Are their eyes of wistful shadow.

"Ye violet eyes of my bride, so blue,
For your sake my life is over!
Yet most I bless the elder tree
Where you took me for your lover.

12.

## THE WATER NYMPHS.

THERE'S a murmur of waves on the lonely strand,
The moon o'er the deep has risen;
The warrior rests on the white sea sand,
His dreams are a radiant prison.

The lovely nymphs in their filmy dress
Mount up from the waters under;
They fancy the youth is asleep, and press
Around him with stealthy wonder.

A marvelling finger the first one laid
On the plumes he wore in his bonnet;
With his woven armour another played,
And the bandolier upon it.

With gleaming eyes then laughed the third,
As she snatched from the sheath its treasure;
She leaned upon the naked sword,
And smiled on the knight for pleasure.

The fourth drew near with a merry dance,
And yearned till the words welled over:
"Fair mortal flower, sweet the chance
If thou hadst been my lover!"

The hand of the knight the fifth held fast,
And kissed it long and dumbly.
The sixth was coy, but she kissed at last
His mouth and his cheeks so comely.

To the wily knight it seemed far from wise
To wake, that the joy should miss him;
So motionless under the moon he lies,
As long as they care to kiss him.

## 13.

## BERTRAND DE BORN.

A NOBLE pride in all his features,
Upon his brow thought's furrowed score,
The hearts of men were but his creatures:
Bertrand de Born, the troubadour.

He lured the lioness and caught her,
The queen of the Plantagenet;
Both sons he won, he won the daughter:
He sang them all into his net.

And how he fooled the king and stirred him!
In tears would melt his rage and scorn,
If, sweet discoursing, he but heard him:
The troubadour, Bertrand de Born.

## 14.

## SPRING.

THE waters are twinkling and eddying down—
One loves in the spring so sweetly!
By the river the shepherdess weaves a crown,
She fashions it fair and featly.

There's a budding, and flowing, and fragrance glad—
One loves in the spring so sweetly!
The shepherdess sighs with a bosom sad:
"By whom were my crown worn meetly?"

By the river a knight comes riding past,
He greets her as gay as the weather!
Such a sorrowful look the shepherdess cast
After his vanishing feather!

She weeps, and into the water flings
Her garland fashioned featly.
Of love and of kisses the nightingale sings—
One loves in the spring so sweetly!

## 15.

## ALI BEY.

Maiden arms entwine him softly,
Ali Bey, the Faith's defender:
Glimpse of pleasures Paradisal
Are on earth by Allah granted.

Odalisques, as fair as houris,
Like gazelles, as supple, graceful—
Curls his beard the one, the other
Smoothes the wrinkles from his forehead

While the lute a third one smiting,
Sings and dances, laughs, and drops him
On his heart a kiss that kindles
Into flames of utmost rapture.

But, without, a sudden clamour,
Trumpet-blare and clash of sabres,
Call to arms, and musket volley—
"'Tis the Franks, my lord, advancing!"

And the hero mounts his war-horse,
Flies to battle; like a dreamer
Feels the maiden arms around him,
Maiden arms that soft entwine him.

While he sabres by the dozen
Frankish heads from off their shoulders,
He is laughing like a lover;
Yea, his laugh is sweet and tender.

## 16.

## PSYCHE.

In her hand the lamp so little,
In her heart the glow so great,
Psyche steals toward the chamber
Of her lovely sleeping mate.

And she blushes and she trembles,
When she sees him fair as day—
But the God of love, uncovered,
Wakens up and flies away.

Eighteen hundred years of penance!
And the poor thing almost dies!
Still she fasts because, once only,
Love lay naked to her eyes.

17.

## THE UNKNOWN ONE.

I AM sure to meet her daily,
Meet my golden-headed fair one,
Where the chestnuts in the garden
Of the Tuileries are blooming.

Every day she promenades there
With two ancient ugly ladies—
Are they aunts? Dragoons were liker,
Masquerading petticoated!

Of this grim moustachioed couple
Who accompany her, fearful:
Even worse intimidated
By my heart and its misgiving:

I have never dared to whisper,
When we met, or sigh a greeting;
I have hardly dared, with glances,
To inform her of my passion.

But to-day I have discovered
What her name is: she is Laura,
Like the fair Provençal lady
Whom the famous poet worshipped.

She is Laura! I'm as lucky
As was Petrarch, he who honoured
And extolled the lovely woman
In his canzonets and sonnets.

She is Laura! I can riot
And platonically revel
In the beauty now and sweetness
Of the name—He did no more.

## 18.

## CHANGE.

I AM weary for the present
  Of brunettes! This year I swear
Once again by eyes of azure,
  Once again by golden hair.

She is blond, the maid I worship,
  She is pious, mild—would stand
Fair as any holy picture,
  With a lily in her hand.

And her form is slim and dreamy—
  Little flesh, abundant soul;
All her spirit-fires burn upward,
  Faith and hope and love their goal.

And she says she knows of German,
(Though I doubt it), not a line;
"Have you never read the poem
Of our Klopstock, so divine?"

19.

## THE WITCH.

"WORTHY neighbours, by your leave!
Oft a witch, who would deceive,
And a mortal's soul endanger,
To an animal will change her.

"Now, your cat there is my wife;
She's her image to the life;
By her purr, her lick, her smell,
And her eyes, I know her well . . ."

The neighbour and his wife exclaim,
"Avaunt with her, in heaven's name!"
The watch-dog barks, "Bow! Wow!"
The yelling cat shrieks, "Miau!"

## 20.

## FORTUNE.

MADAME Fortune, 'tis in vain
That you play the prude so plain!
Toil and struggle will supply me
With the favours you deny me.

You shall bow beneath my stroke;
I will bend you to my yoke.
You will drop your weapons idly—
But my wounds will gape so widely

That my blood will ebb away,
Quenched the courage once so gay;
In the fight I shall be glorious,
But shall perish when victorious.

## 21.

## LAMENT

### OF A MEDIÆVAL GERMAN YOUTH.

'TIS well to win sweet Virtue's smile,
  Ah, woe! if she refuse it!
I met with bad companions,
  Who tempted me to lose it.

They won my gold by fraud and guile,
With cards and dice undid me;
The maidens, with their laughter,
Of sorrow sweetly rid me.

But, when they had made me drunk and vile,
They tore my garments off me;
And I, poor youth, was driven
To the door, for all to scoff me.

I woke at morn, and thought awhile
Some trick my fancy played me!
I sat, poor youth, at Cassel—
A soldier they had made me.

22.

## AWAY!

THE day is in love with darksome night,
The spring's in love with winter;
Life is in love with death—
And thou, thou lovest me!

Thou lovest me—and shadows grim
Already close around thee;
Thy bloom and beauty fade;
Thy soul to death is bleeding.

Ah, let me be! and only love
The butterflies that gaily
Flit i' the scent and sunshine—
Forsake me and my sorrow!

23.

## DAME METTE.

(FROM THE DANISH.)

WITH Sir Peter at wine Sir Bender sat,
Said Sir Bender, "I wager securely,
Though your singing compel all the world beside,
Dame Mette withstandeth it surely."

To which Sir Peter: "I'll lay my horse
Against your hounds, Sir Bender,
Dame Mette will hie to my hall this night:
'Tis thither my song will send her."

And lo! when the hour of midnight fell,
Sir Peter began his singing;
Over the water, and over the wood
His notes came sweetly ringing.

Hushed is the river, the listening pines
Are mute where the forests darken,
The pale moon trembles above in heaven,
The stars with their wise ears hearken.

Dame Mette has heard it; she starts from her sleep:
"What singer without is wooing!"
She draws on her gown and forth she steps—
She hastens to her undoing.

And through the water, and through the wood,
She wanders far and fleetly;
'Twas Sir Peter who drew her for doom to his house,
With the song he sang so sweetly.

And when she returned by the morning light,
At his door Sir Bender sought her;
"Oh, where have you been, Dame Mette, this night?
Your kirtle is full of water."

"I have been to the pool where the witches dwell,
Who the future dark uncover;
And there, by the teasing water-sprites,
I was wet and sprinkled over."

"The sand by the witches' pool is soft,
Not thither, I ween, your going;
For wounded and bloody are both your feet,
And your face with blood is flowing."

"I have been to-night to the elfin wood,
To watch the fairies dancing,
And there I wounded face and feet,
'Gainst boughs and brambles chancing."

"The elves, they dance in the month of May
On the smooth and flowery meadows;
But the winds of autumn are blowing cold,
They howl in the forest shadows."

"By Peter Nielson I've been this night;
He sang a song of wonder,
And through the water, and through the wood
He drew me to him yonder.

"The notes he sang are as strong as death,
In my bosom they burn and sigh now;
They drew me to death and a doom of woe;
I know that I must die now."

The minster door is hung with black,
There's mournful music rolling;
For Dame Mette, who came to a pitiful end,
The passing bell is tolling.

Sir Bender he stood beside the bier,
And a sorrowful sighing made he:
"Alack! I have lost my faithful hounds,
And eke my lovely ladye."

24.

## A MEETING.

THERE is music beneath the linden trees,
And a dancing of youths and maidens;
'Mid the dancers are two whom nobody knows;
They gracefully move to the cadence.

And it's up and down, with a motion strange
They foot it, glancing shyly;
Then they laugh to each other and shake their heads,
And the maiden whispers slyly,

"'Tis a curious lily, my lovely youth,
That trembles upon your bonnet;
It only grows i' the depth o' the sea—
No son of Adam won it.

"You are the merman who comes to woo
The village maids to your wishes.
As soon as I saw you I knew you well
By your teeth like bones of fishes."

And it's up and down, with a motion strange,
They foot it, glancing shyly;
Then they laugh to each other and shake their heads,
And the gallant whispers slyly,

"My lovely lady, I'm fain to know
Why your icy hand so cold is;
And tell me why, of your garment white,
The hem so wet i' the fold is.

"As soon as I saw you I knew you well,
By your nods and curtsies tricksy,
I knew you were no child of earth,
But my cousin, the water nixie."

The fiddles give over, the dance is done,
They part with a courteous greeting;
They know one another alas! too well,
And crave for no further meeting.

## 25.

## KING HAROLD HARFAGER.

THE great King Harold Harfager
Sits in the sea below,
Beside his lovely water-fay;
The years, they come and go.

He cannot live, he cannot die,
Bewitched in his magic tomb;
Already for two hundred years
He has dreed his blissful doom.

The head of the king on the lovely lap
  Of the woman lies, and still
He gazes upward on her eyes,
  He cannot gaze his fill.

His golden hair grows silver-grey,
  And, from his face so pale,
The bones of his cheek, like a ghost's, stick out,
  His body is withered and frail.

And many a time from his dream of love
  On a sudden he starts, and shakes,
For the billows on high are raging wild,
  And his crystal palace quakes.

And oft in the wind he seems to hear
  The Norseman's battle-call,
And lifts his arms in gleeful haste;
  Then sadly lets them fall.

And even the sailors he will hear,
  Who sing as they sail along,
And praise King Harold Harfager
  In a glorious hero-song.

And then the king from his inmost soul
Will groan and sob and weep;
But the water-fay will quickly bend,
And kiss his woe to sleep.

## 26.

## THE UNDERWORLD.

### I.

PLUTO sighs—he's sick of life—
"Would I were a single man!
Since my married life began
I have learned that hell itself
Is not hell, without a wife.

"O to be unwed! For bound
Thus to Proserpine, I crave
Only for a quiet grave!
When she scolds, the barking even
Of my Cerberus is drowned.

"Still in vain I strive for peace.
In this world of shades, such woe
None of all the damned can know!
Toiling Sisyphus I envy—
Envy the Danaïdes."

II.

In the realm of shadows, in golden state,
Enthroned by the side of her royal mate,
Sits Proserpine proud,
Her sad head bowed;
And her sorrowful heart keeps crying :

"For the red o' the rose and the nightingale's song
For the kiss o' the sun, I thirst, I long.
Here, far from my meadows,
'Mid ghosts and shadows,
I lose my youth in sighing.

"I am forged to wedlock, body and soul,
In this dark, accursëd, rat-like hole.
The ghosts, when I sleep,
Through my windows peep,
And the Styx has the voice of the dying.

"I invited old Charon to dinner to-day—
The man has no calves, he is bald and grey;
And the judges have faces
As dull as the place is—
The sweet o' my life is flying."

III.

While the underworld so drear is,
And the mounting trouble grows,
On the earth above wails Ceres,
And the crazy goddess goes,
Hair dishevelled, kerchief flying;
Still she hastens, and her word
Is the old lament and crying
You have all so often heard.

"Has the spring brought back her fairness,
Is the earth renewed and young,
That the hills have lost their bareness,
And the icy bands are sprung?
Jove, with not a cloud for cover,
Laughs from out the rivers blue,
Light the wings of Zephyr hover,
And the buds are peeping through.
Every grove with song is yearning,
And the Oread whispers chill,
'All thy flowers are returning,
But thy daughter lingers still.'

"Ah, how long, without her heeding,
I have toiled to win her back!
All thy rays, O Titan, speeding,
I have sent upon her track;

But her lovely face is hidden,
  None hath told me where it bides,
To the day she is forbidden,
  Though he findeth all besides.
Mighty Jove, art thou the snarer?
  Or, enkindled by her charm,
Did the gloomy Pluto bear her
  To his Stygian floods of harm?

"Who will seek her should she tarry,
  To my sorrow, on that strand?
Only shades the boat will carry,
  Though it put so oft from land.
Never happy eye had knowing
  Of that realm of night forlorn:
Since the Styx began its flowing
  None alive its wave hath borne;
Though a thousand steps lead under,
  There's no stairway for return;
Earth and hell remain asunder,
  Though a mother's tears may yearn."

IV.

"Mother of my wife, good Ceres,
  Weep no longer, questing sadly!
I will grant you what so dear is—
  I myself have suffered badly.

"Grieve no further for your daughter;
I will honourably share her:
To the world from which I brought her,
Half of every year will spare her.

"When the orchard trees are laden,
She will help you in the summer:
Wear the straw hat of a maiden,
Wreathed with flowers that become her.

"She will dream and sigh when heaven
Sets the flames of dusk a-glowing,
And some loutish swain at even
On the shepherd's flute is blowing.

"She will lead, in harvest dances,
Lads and lasses heavy-footed:
'Mid the clowns and geese—the chance is—
Be a lioness reputed.

"Blessed peace! In comfort single
I can breathe and live my life now!
Can my punch with Lethe mingle,
And forget I have a wife now."

V.

"Some grief, I think, thy cheek has paled,
And secret yearning dims thine eye—
I know thy sorrow and its cry:
O life, O love, whose fruit has failed!

"Thy head droops sad! I cannot put
The seasons back and make thee young,
Nor heal the heart that pain has wrung:
O life, O love, that have failed of fruit!"

# POEMS FOR THE TIMES.

(1839–1846.)

# POEMS FOR THE TIMES.

## (1839–1846.)

### I.

### SOUND DOCTRINE.

BEAT the drum with a bearing bold,
And kiss the pretty vivandière.
A wisdom that's better you'll learn from none,
No book will teach you a truer, I swear.

Beat reveillé with all your might,
Waken sleepers to rise with the sun;
Beat rub-a-dub as you march along:
A wisdom that's better you'll learn from none.

Hegel's philosophy's nothing but this;
Because I am wise I have understood;
No book will teach you a truer, I swear;
I know, for, you see, I'm a drummer good.

2.

## ADAM THE FIRST.

GENDARMES of heaven with flaming sword
Were sent by Thee unkindly,
To drive me forth from Paradise;
'Twas harshly done and blindly.

I took my wife and wandered far;
In other lands I range now;
But I have eaten wisdom's fruit—
That fact can never change now.

Thou canst not hide from me Thy weak
And despicable blunders,
However great Thou wouldst appear,
By dint of death and thunders.

O God, how pitiful is this
*Consilium abeundi!*
I call it a *Magnificus*
Of earth, a *Lumen Mundi!*

I would not have the Paradise
From which I once was chidden;
No Eden can that Eden be
Which holds a fruit forbidden.

The right to freedom must be mine;
  Where power to compel is,
The Paradise, however fair,
  A prison and a hell is.

3.

## A WARNING.

PARLOUS is your case, my friend!
  Books like these to dream of printing!
  Would you win or wealth or honour,
You must toady, fawn, and bend.

I had wished you one who cowers,
  Not who speaks before the people
  Thus of holy priests and parsons,
Principalities and powers!

To destruction you're consigned!
  Long and strong the arm of princes,
  Long the tongues of priests and parsons,
Long the public ear, you'll find.

4.

## TO A POLITICAL POET.

You sing as once Tyrtæus sang,
Moved by heroic rapture;
But you have chosen ill your time,
A public hard to capture.

'Tis true they listen with applause:
The soaring thought inspires them;
Your perfect mastery of form
To acclamation fires them.

Over their wine your name they'll shout,
And toast you, a gallant fellow,
And many a stirring battle-song
With lusty throats will bellow.

Your hymns of freedom lads will sing
In the pothouse with a zest, too:
They add a flavour to their beer,
And help them to digest, too.

## 5.

## PIOUS EJACULATIONS.

MODERN doubt must all deplore!
If they steal our God, no more
Can we curse to heart's content—
Heaven—Lord God—Sacrament!

We'll forego our prayers gladly,
But one needs one's curses badly
When the foot is foeward bent—
Heaven—Lord God—Sacrament!

Not for love, for hate alone,
Leave us God; if He were gone
None could give his curses vent—
Heaven—Lord God—Sacrament!

## 6.

## A FRAGMENT.

THE owl, she studied the Pandects,
Canonical law and the *Glossa*,
And when she came to Italy,
She asked, "Where lies Canossa?"

The ravens old and weary
Answered with drooping wings,
"'Tis long since the old Canossa
Passed with perishing things.

"We might haply build a new one,
But gone, with the ancient town,
Are the marble blocks and the freestone,
And the guests with a golden crown."

## 7.

## TO A QUONDAM FOLLOWER OF GOETHE.

(1832.)

Is your soul, then, such a climber!
Has she really left beneath her
Now the cold unruffled ether
Of the ancient bard of Weimar?

Klärchen's company is dreary,
Gretchen, Serlo's maid, defective?
The affinities elective
Of Ottilia only weary?

'Tis for Germany you'll fight now,
And the day of Mignon's over?
And Philina, freedom's lover,
Does not satisfy your flight now?

For the people's cause, as meet is,
With a Lüneburger's valour
You will boldly talk till pallor
Strikes the despots and their treaties!

I am pleased that, far and wide, a
Rumour tells me you are lauded:
As the Mirabeau applauded—
Of the Lüneburger Heide!

## 8.

## THE SECRET.

We sigh not, but, serene and tearless,
We often smile—yea, laugh aloud;
No woful glance betrays the secret
That silence will for ever shroud.

Although its dumb and hidden torture
Within our bleeding soul lies deep:
Though in our stormy heart it clamours:
The pain-drawn lips their counsel keep.

Go, ask the suckling in the cradle;
Go, ask the dead men i' the mould.
Perchance from them you may discover
The secret I have never told.

## 9.

## ON THE WATCHMAN'S ARRIVAL IN PARIS.

"O HURRYING watchman, hither come,
You flee as from some ill at hand!
How are the dear ones in my home,
And have they freed the Fatherland?"

"All's well; as in some house secure,
The blessing grows and yields increase;
Our Germany develops sure:
But from within, by ways of peace.

"Not superficially like France,
Whose outward life such freedom dares;
The German, warier of mischance,
Deep in his soul his freedom wears.

"The minster at Cologne's complete,
Thanks to the Hohenzollern grit;
Hapsburg gave money, as was meet;
A Wittelsbach sent glass for it.

"A constitution, freer laws,
Are pledged us by the royal word—
A word that's worth as much as was,
Deep in the Rhine, the Nibelung hoard.

"Oh, none shall rob us of the Rhine,
That Brutus free 'mongst rivers famed!
His feet the Dutch in bondage twine,
His captive head the Swiss have tamed.

"And God will grant a fleet at length,
And German galleys, by the score,
Employ superfluous German strength;
Then prison stripes will wound no more.

"Spring blossoms, seed-pods burst and fall,
We draw our breath, like Nature, free!
And when we dare not print at all,
The censorship will cease to be."

## 10.

## THE DRUM-MAJOR.

'Tis the old drum-major, luckless knave;
How low his lot and dreary!
In the Emperor's time he blossomed brave:
How bright he was and cheery!

He balanced his stick and loudly smote,
His eyes with laughter dancing;
The silver'lace upon his coat
I' the sun was always glancing.

And when he entered a village or town
With drum and martial cadence,
An echo went beating up and down
In the hearts of the wives and maidens.

He came, he saw, he conquered straight;
No handsomer man you met then;
With women's tears (they were his fate)
His black moustache was wet then.

Bear it we must! In every land,
When the foreign conqueror came there,
The lord was felled by the tyrant's hand,
The drummer subdued the dame there.

Patient and dumb as a German oak,
We bore the grief that galled us,
Till freedom's word the Powers spoke,
And forth to vengeance called us.

Like the bison in his battle-charge,
We raised our horns and rushed then;
We sang our Körner's songs at large,
The might of France we crushed then.

Those awful lays that thrilled us through,
The tyrant's ear will dread long;
The Emperor and the drummer, too,
They fled affrighted headlong.

The wage of sin at last they won,—
Oh, sad the end of such is!—
The Emperor Napoleon
Was caught in England's clutches.

On Saint Helena, England's yoke
To durance vile compelled him,
Till cancer of the stomach broke
The bitter bonds that held him.

The poor drum-major, once so bold,
Has lost his post as well now;
To save himself from hunger cold
He serves in our hotel now.

He scours the pot and tends the grate,
Must wood and water carry,
And up the stairs with palsied pate,
He coughs, and dares not tarry.

And Fritz, who calls here, never can
Deny his tongue its pleasure;
The long and slouching queer old man
He harries out of measure.

A truce to mockery, O Fritz!
Germania's sons should scorn thus
To polish bright their cruel wits
On greatness grown forlorn thus.

Such folk we should not so deride,
But treat with reverence rather;
Perhaps, upon your mother's side,
The grey-beard is your father.

II.

## DEGENERACY.

Has nature altered for the worse, then
Our human failings has she learned?
To me the animals, the flowers,
Seem, like the rest, to liars turned.

I doubt the chasteness of the lily.
The butterfly, that coxcomb gay,
Hovers about her with his kisses,
And steals her purity away.

Nay, I am not so very certain
Even of the modest violet.
She thirsts in secret after glory;
Her scent's the lure of a coquette.

And does the nightingale feel truly
What in her song so sweetly thrills?
'Tis only from routine, I fancy,
She rapturously sobs and trills.

Truth from the world is disappearing,
And faith, I fear, has vanished too.
The dogs still smell and fawn about us,
But are, alas! no longer true.

## 12.

## HENRY.

In Canossa's castle courtyard
Stands the German Kaiser Henry,
In his shirt of penance, barefoot,
And the night is wet and chilly.

Watching figures peer above him
Through the casement, and the moonlight
Gleams on Gregory bald-pated,
Gilds the bosom of Mathilda.

And the pale-lipped Henry murmurs,
Murmurs pious paternosters,
But he grinds his teeth in secret,
In his kingly heart he whispers,

"Far in Germany, my country,
Soar the high and mighty mountains;
In their silent mines the iron
For my battle-axe is growing.

"Far in Germany, my country,
Tower the oaks in many a forest;
In the highest oak the handle
For my battle-axe is growing.

"Thou, my dear, my faithful country,
Thou wilt bring the man to birth too
Who will crush this snake that tortures:
With the battle-axe will smite him."

13.

## LIFE'S VOYAGE.

SUNBEAMS that flicker! with laughter and song
A vessel that merrily swings along!
With a lightsome heart and comrades dear
I sat inside with never a fear.

But the ship was wrecked and fell asunder;
My friends, weak swimmers all, went under.
By the Fatherland they sank in the sea;
To the shores of the Seine the storm bore me.

And now I sit in another boat;
With comrades new I toss and float
On foreign billows, without a chart—
My home how far! How sad my heart!

And we sing and we laugh, o'er the waters driven—
But the wind pipes up, and the planks are riven—
Quenched in the sky is the last lone star—
How sad my heart! My home how far!

## 14.

## THE NEW JEWISH HOSPITAL AT HAMBURG.

A HOSPITAL for sick and needy Jews,
For the poor sons of sorrow thrice accursed,
Who groan beneath the heavy, threefold evil
Of pain, and poverty, and Judaism.

The most malignant of the three the last is:
That family disease a thousand years old,
The plague they brought with them from the Nile valley—
The unregenerate faith of ancient Egypt.

Incurable deep ill! defying treatment
Of *douche*, and vapour-bath, and apparatus
Of surgery, and all the healing medicine
This house can offer to its sickly inmates.

Will Time, the eternal goddess, in compassion
Root out this dark calamity transmitted
From sire to son?—Will one day a descendant
Recover, and grow well and wise and happy?

I know not. Let us praise and bless him meanwhile,
Whose tender heart so lovingly and wisely
Sought to allay such woes as can be softened,
Upon the wounds a kindly balsam dropping.

The dear, good man! He builded here a refuge
For troubles that the art of the physician
(Or Death, at worst!) could heal, providing fully
For pillows, soothing draughts, and careful tendance.

He was a man of deeds and did his utmost:
Gave to good works, when life had reached its evening,
The wage of his laborious days, humanely
Finding refreshment after toil in mercy.

He gave with open hand—yet alms more costly
Fell from his eyes: tears fair and very precious,
With which he often wept the vast and hopeless
Incurable affliction of his brothers.

15.

## TO GEORGE HERWEGH.

HERWEGH, thou lark of iron,
Winging aloft with a clang and a shout
To the holy light o' the sun!
Is the German winter done?
Is Spring abroad with her blossoms out?

Herwegh, thou lark of iron,
Because thy heavenward flight is strong,
Thou dost not see the earth below—
The spring that thou hast sung doth blow
Beautiful only in thy song.

16.

## TO THE SAME.

MY Germany was drunk, and you—
You drank her toasts and joined the wassail:
Believed in every pipe-bowl; true
Acclaimed each black-red-golden tassel.

But when the transport sweet was o'er,
You were surprised, my friend, past measure;
For lo! the folk were sick and sore,
An hour ago so flushed with pleasure!

Foul apples now for wreaths of pride,
And rudeness from the lower orders;
Gendarmes escorting by your side,
They bring you to the German borders.

And there you stand, and moan, "Alack!"
The boundary posts through tears descrying
Those pillars like a zebra's back;
And thus you ease your soul by sighing:

"Aranjuez, those days, how good!
That vanished on thy sands too fleetly,
When I before King Philip stood,
Among his grandees honoured meetly!

"When Marquis Posa was my *rôle*,
With what delight the king applauded!
My verse how loud he would extol,
Although my prose he never lauded!"

## 17.

## THE TENDENCY.

GERMAN bard! acclaim the glory
Of our German freedom high;
Be your song a brand to fire us;
To heroic deeds inspire us,
Like the *Marseillaise* of story.

Turn from Werther and his cooing,
For his Lotte let him cry.
Voice the message to your people
That has rung from every steeple—
Dagger, sword, and doughty doing.

Let the flute be trampled under,
With the soul's idyllic sigh.
Be your nation's trump of battle,
Boom of cannon, musket rattle;
Blow and crash and kill and thunder.

Loud with thunder let each day be,
Till the tyrants all shall fly.
Take my counsel for your banner,
But be sure you keep your manner
Vague and general as may be.

## 18.

## THE CHILD.

God grants the good in dreams their prayer;
Perhaps 'twas so with thee!
Thou hast conceived half unaware,
O Virgin Germany!

In course of time thou shalt bring forth
A boy, a goodly son:
An archer bold, whose fame and worth
Shall match what Cupid won.

He'll pierce the eagle, though his flight
Be ne'er so high in heaven;
The double-headed eagle's might
Shall by his bolt be riven.

But never, like the God of Love,
That pagan blind, I wot,
Will he his hose and shirt remove,
And turn a sans-culotte.

Here climate, morals and police,
On old and young impress
A thing they recked not of in Greece—
The tyranny of dress.

## 19.

## THE PROMISE.

GERMAN freedom, in the mire
You no more shall soil your feet,
Boots and stockings for the street
You shall have to heart's desire.

And your head a cap shall sport,
  Made of fur whose comfort warm
  Will protect your ears from harm
When the days are bleak and short.

You shall even have your food—
  Ah, the future that is dawning!—
  But be sure no satyr fawning
Tempts you further than is good!

Be not bold to court disasters!
  Show the reverence that inferiors
  Ought to yield to their superiors,
And respect your burgomasters.

## 20.

## THE CHANGELING.

An infant with a pumpkin head,
A grizzly cue, moustachios red;
With spidery arms, but strong to draw;
No bowels, but a giant's maw,—

A changeling that a corporal left
Within our cradle when, by theft,
He bore away our babe, unseen;—
Abortion born of lies unclean,
Or offspring, maybe, of the hound
The ancient sinner fondled round,—
The monstrous thing I need not name,—
Burn, drown it quick, for very shame!

21.

## THE EMPEROR OF CHINA.

My father was a worthless knave
To whom a lie came handy;
But I'm a monarch bold and brave,
And like my glass of brandy.

A magic drink is Schnaps! I know,
For I have felt its power.
I toss a bumper down, and lo!
My China bursts in flower.

My Middle Kingdom, purged of strife,
A blooming mead is merely;
A fruitful vine becomes my wife,
And I, a man—or nearly.

Abundance blossoms everywhere,
The sick recover straightly;
Confucius, my philosopher,
Thinks lucidly and greatly.

On almond cakes my soldiers fare—
Rye bread there's not enough in;
And silk and satin are the wear
Of every ragamuffin.

My invalided ancient knights—
My mandarins—go bragging
Abroad again like lusty wights,
Their pigtails bravely wagging.

The great pagoda's built at last,
Faith's symbol and her wonder;
And every Jew abjures his past,
And wears the Dragon-order.

The spirit of revolt is tamed;
The noblest Manchoos shout now,
"We want no constitution framed,
We want the rod, the knout now."

The sons of Æsculapius
Cry out on dissipation;
I drink my brandy—(let them fuss!)—
To benefit my nation.

Then here's a dram, and one dram more
It tastes like very manna!
Their wretched wine my people pour,
And shout with me, "Hosanna!"

## 22.

## THE NEW ALEXANDER.

### I.

THERE is a king in Thule still,
A doughty champagne-lover;
And, when this king has drunk his fill,
His tearful eyes well over.

And sitting thus his knights among,—
The whole historic school's there,—
The king of Thule's heavy tongue
Will babble like a fool's there.

"The Grecian Alexander, when
His little band victorious
Had conquered all within his ken,
Became a drunkard glorious.

"But such a thirst his fighting wrought—
A thirst beyond your thinking—
That more he drank than mortal ought,
And died at last of drinking.

"A wiser man am I than he,
And have his scheme amended;
The drinking has come first with me:
I've started where he ended.

"More glory, being drunk, I'll win,
For, like a hero hurled,
I'll stagger on from inn to inn,
And conquer all the world."

II.

He babbles in his drunken mirth,
This modern Alexander:
Expounds his plan whereby the earth
Shall hail him its commander:—

"Lothringia, and Alsatia, too,
Will yield, nor tax our prowess;
The horse must needs the mare pursue,
The calves are where the cow is.

"But I long for the better land, Champagne,
Where green the vines are growing
That blissfully illume the brain,
And set life's sweets a-flowing.

"'Tis there I'll show my martial mood,
For we'll commence our task there.
With a popping of corks, the amber blood
Will foam in every flask there.

"There to the stars will mount my name,
And, since he's lost who tarries,
I'll follow up those deeds of fame,
And boldly march on Paris.

"And, having reached the Barrier wall,
I'll halt, nor enter straightway;
They charge no duty on wine at all
Before the Barrier gate-way.

III.

"My teacher, my Aristotle,
Was at first a priest, no more:
One of the Gallic colony:
And priestly bands he wore.

"Then later, as philosopher,
Extremes he reconciled;
And, of this system, I, alas!
Was reared, the luckless child.

"I grew up neither fish nor flesh,
But something bred betwixt—
A jumble of the time's extremes,
Preposterously mixed.

"I am not bad, I am not good,
Am neither quick nor slow;
If I went forward yesterday,
To-day I'll backward go;

"An obscurantist full of light,
And neither mare nor horse,
Both Sophocles and Canute are
My inspiration's source.

"In Jesus Christ I put my trust,
To Bacchus closely cling,
Together the divine extremes
Contriving thus to bring."

## 23.

## HYMN TO THE KING OF BAVARIA.

### I.

'Tis Louis of Bavaria,
Few beings are so splendid;
In him his people reverence
The monarch king-descended.

A connoisseur, he bids them limn
The fairest women's faces,
And then, as eunuch of the arts,
His painted harem paces.

At Ratisbon a Golgotha
Of marble, builded stable,
He bade them rear, and, for each head
Himself he wrote the label.

The great "Walhalla Brotherhood"—
A master work—each man is
For soul and deeds and service praised,
From Teut to Schinderhannes.

Luther alone is barred; no word
You'll find, his glory vaunting—
In museums of natural history
The whale is often wanting.

King Louis is a poet great,
And when he sings, Apollo
Drops humbly on his knee, and prays,
"Enough! lest madness follow."

King Louis is a warrior bold,
Like Otto, his son victorious,
Who, sick at Athens, fouled his throne—
A deed of valour glorious.

And when King Louis dies, at Rome
The Pope will canonise him.
He will look as well as our cat in cuffs
In the halo they'll devise him.

When monkeys and when kangaroos
In Jesus seek salvation,
King Louis is the patron saint
They'll choose for adoration.

II.

King Louis of Bavaria
Said, sorrowfully sighing,
"The leaves, they fade, the winter's near,
And swift the summer's flying.

"Though Schelling and Cornelius
Forsook me, 'tis no matter;
The former had his reason lost,
His fancy fine, the latter.

"But that my crown's most precious pearl
They stole—ah! that was cruel;—
My master of gymnastic feats,
My Massmann, peerless jewel.

"'Tis this that has subdued my soul:
With grief has overcome it;
I miss the man who, in his art,
Had reached the highest summit.

"His stumpy legs, his nose so flat,
I shall no more, alas! see;
Nor the somersaults, that gay he turned
Like a poodle in the grass, see.

"German according to Zeune and Grimm
Was all that he was pat in;
In foreign tongues his lore was scant,
He knew nor Greek nor Latin.

"He drank oak-coffee, his patriotism
Was strong and none could quell it;
He devoured the French, and Limbourg cheese:
You could not fail to smell it.

"Give me my Massmann back again,
O brother-in-law! His face is
'Mongst other faces what, 'mongst bards,
My own poetic place is.

"Cornelius keep, O brother-in-law!
And Schelling; (without saying,
'Tis understood that Rückert's thine),
But chide my Massmann's straying.

"Content thee, O my brother-in-law,
With having eclipsed my glory,
And forced on me the minor *rôle*
In Germany's proud story." . . .

III.

At Munich, in the Chapel Royal,
A fair Madonna stands;
Her Christ, the joy of earth and heaven,
She cradles in her hands.

When Louis of Bavaria
This holy picture saw,
He knelt and stammered blissfully
With reverence and awe.

"O Mary, Queen of Heaven high!
Princess from blemish free!
Thy courtiers all are saints of God,
And angels wait on thee.

"The wingëd pages do thy will,
And in thy golden hair
Twine flower-bands, and, after thee,
Thy trailing robes upbear.

"Mary! thou lily without stain,
Thou pure and morning star!
Oh! many are thy miracles,
And great thy wonders are.

"Then sprinkle, from thy mercies' fount,
One drop upon my face;
On me, most high and blessed one,
Bestow some sign of grace."

She moves: the lips are moved in prayer
Of Jesus' Mother mild;
Impatiently she shakes her head,
And whispers to her child,

"Oh! well that in my arms thou art,
And not within my womb;
Well that no misadventure now
Thy life unborn can doom.

"For had I, ere my time was come,
Beheld this hateful clod,
To a monster I had given birth,
Instead of to a God!"

24.

## CHURCH-COUNCILLOR PROMETHEUS.

Good Sir Paulus, noble robber,
Gloomy-browed the gods regard thee;
Direst anger and displeasure
Is the meed they will award thee.

Thou hast stolen from Olympus,
From the treasures that divine be;
And, if Jove's policemen catch thee,
The Promethean doom will thine be.

True, he stole what even worse was:
Stole the light in flame upwelling,
To illume the souls of mortals—
*Thou* hast stolen the works of Schelling:

Just the opposite of radiance;
Their abysmal darkness such is,
(Like the plague of ancient Egypt),
That one handles it and touches.

## 25.

## TO THE WATCHMAN.

### (ON A MORE RECENT OCCASION.)

KEEP but unspoilt your style and heart,
And you are free to choose your part.
My friend, I will not judge or blame you,
Even though a counsellor they name you.

They're making an absurd ado
About this counsellorship and you.
From the Seine to the Elbe, (how great your glory!)
I have heard for months the selfsame story.

Do the legs that hurried on, to-day
With equal speed retrace their way?
On Swabian crabs do you backward wander?—
With princes' courtesans philander?

Perhaps you are tired, and fain for rest.
All night you boldly blew your best;
Your trusty horn you will hang on the wall now,
Let blow who will to the rabble's call now.

You go to bed and shut your eyes,
But find no peace; by the mocking cries
They raise without, your slumber's shaken:
"Art sleeping, Brutus? Save! Awaken!"

Bawlers like these can never know
Why the best of watchmen cease to blow;
Young braggadocios, ripe for riot,
Guess not why men at last grow quiet.

You ask of me, how wags my world.
The weather's fine, the wind upfurled,
The weathercocks in a quandary:
The breezes neither blow nor vary.

## 26.

## A CONSOLING THOUGHT.

We sleep as Brutus slept of old,
But he awoke; the dagger cold
He plunged in Cæsar's breast—no scratch
Gave Rome's oppressors their despatch.

We smoke tobacco, no Romans we.
Each people has its taste, you see:
After its fashion at greatness looks!
A peerless dumpling Swabia cooks.

O we are Germans, decent and kind!
We sleep like hogs, with an easy mind,
We wake with a thirst, 'tis very true,
But princes' blood is not our brew.

Faithful are we as the oak, long tried,
Or the linden tree—'tis our chiefest pride.
The land of the oak and the linden fair
No Brutus hath borne, nor will ever bear.

And even were a Brutus found,
No Cæsars grow on German ground;
For such 'twere vain to look: instead,
We make delicious gingerbread.

And we have six-and-thirty lords;
('Tis not too many!) each one wards
His breast with a star above the starch;
No need to fear the Ides of March.

We call them Fathers, and Fatherland
The country that this royal band,
From sire to son, have parcelled out.
We love our sausage and sauerkraut.

And when our Father walks abroad,
We lift our hats, to reverence awed.
A nursery this of children good,
And no assassins' den of blood.

## 27.

## A TOPSY-TURVY WORLD.

A TOPSY-TURVY world is this,
  Each walks upon his head,
And woodcocks, by the dozen, shoot
  The sportsmen they should dread.

It is the calves who roast the cooks,
  And men are ridden by horses;
On education and on light
  The Catholic owl discourses.

The herring is a sans-culotte;
  Bettina falsehood flees.
And Puss-in-boots upon the stage
  Is acting Sophocles.

An ape has built a Pantheon
  For German sons of glory;
Massmann of late has combed his hair—
  The journals give the story.

The German bears, grown atheists bold,
  Their former faith are spurning;
French parrots, on the other hand,
  Good Christians all are turning.

The *Moniteur* of Uckermark
Would seem with madness smitten:
A dead man, on a living one,
An epitaph has written.

Brothers! Who swims against the stream
Will but in vain distress him!
Come, climb the Tempelhof hill, and cry,
"Long live the King! God bless him!"

28.

## ENLIGHTENMENT.

HAVE your eyes their scales obscuring
Shed, O Michael? Have you seen
How the morsels most alluring
They purloin, and leave you lean,

With a promise, glibly given,
Of celestial rapture sweet,
Where the angels cook, in heaven,
Bliss devoid of butcher-meat?

Grows your faith, O Michael, weaker?
Or your appetite more strong?
You have seized life's brimming beaker,
And you sing a hero-song!

Dare to drain the bowl that's flowing;
  Fill your belly with the best;
In the grave, where we are going,
  You'll have leisure to digest.

## 29.

## GERMANY.

GERMANY'S still a little child,
  But he's nursed by the sun, though tender;
He is not suckled on soothing milk,
  But on flames of burning splendour,

One grows apace on such a diet;
  It fires the blood from languor.
Ye neighbours' children, have a care
  This urchin how ye anger!

He is an awkward infant giant;
  The oak by the roots uptearing,
He'll beat you till your backs are sore,
  And crack your crowns for daring.

He is like Siegfried, the noble child,
  That song-and-saga wonder;
Who, when his fabled sword was forged,
  His anvil cleft in sunder!

To you, who will our Dragon slay,
Shall Siegfried's strength be given.
Hurrah! how joyfully your nurse
Will laugh on you from heaven!

The Dragon's hoard of royal gems
You'll win, with none to share it.
Hurrah! how bright the golden crown
Will sparkle when you wear it!

## 30.

## ONLY WAIT!

BECAUSE my lightnings never blunder,
You fancy (but you fancy wrong)
That impotent must be my thunder!
In thunder I am quite as strong.

In fear and dread you'll find your error
When dawns at last the day of harm;
Then shall ye hear my voice with terror
My voice of thunder and of storm.

That tempest many an oak will shiver,
And, tottering at the awful sound,
Full many a palace proud will quiver,
And many a steeple strew the ground.

## 31.

## NIGHT THOUGHTS.

WHEN on my land I think by night,
The boon of sleep forsakes me quite;
My burning eyes I cannot close,
And many a tear for sorrow flows.

The years they come, the years they pass!
Twelve years have vanished since, alas!
I saw my mother, and amain,
The longing strengthens and the pain.

My longing grows to such a pitch,
The woman surely is a witch!
My thoughts on her for ever dwell.
May God preserve and guard her well!

The dear old woman loves me so!
How tremulous her hand and slow,
How deep the mother's heart is moved,
Her every letter plain has proved.

My mother's always on my mind,
Twelve weary years now lie behind,
Twelve weary years since last I pressed
My dear old mother to my breast.

My Germany will last for aye;
Sound to the core, it mocks decay;
Strong with its oaks and lindens, still
I'll find it waiting when I will.

Thirst for my country I could bear,
But that my mother tarries there;
Germany will not fade nor fly,
But ah! my mother, she might die.

Since last my Fatherland I trod,
So many lie beneath the sod,
That once I loved: I count the roll,
And bleed within my very soul.

I count and count—the numbers grow
Until my heart is big with woe;
Dead men seem waltzing on my breast—
Thank God! they stop and give me rest.

Thank God! at last my window's bright
With France's gay and cheerful light;
My wife comes in, like morning fair,
And smiles away my German care.

## 32.

## THE WEAVERS.

WITH dismal eyes of tearless gloom
They gnash their teeth beside the loom:
"Germany, lo! o'er the shuttle bowed,
Of a threefold curse we weave thy shroud—
We are weaving, weaving!

"A curse for the idol we knelt to in vain,
In winter's cold and hunger's pain;
We waited and hoped, to patience schooled,
But he only mocked, and jeered, and fooled—
We are weaving, weaving!

"A curse for the king, the rich man's king,
Whose heart our misery could not wring:
Who took our pennies and squeezed us dry,
And let us be shot, like dogs to die—
We are weaving, weaving!

"A curse for the Fatherland false and base,
Where nothing can fatten but disgrace;
Where crushed is each flower's tender form,
And decay and corruption feed the worm—
We are weaving, weaving!

"The shuttle flies in the roaring loom;
By day and by night we weave the doom.
Old Germany, lo! o'er our labour bowed,
Of a threefold curse we weave thy shroud.
We are weaving, weaving!"

## OUR NAVY.

### (A NAUTICAL POEM.)

WE dreamed of a gallant fleet erstwhile,
And already, with hope to lead us,
On a sea unfurrowed had set our sail,
With a favouring wind to speed us.

To our frigates we gave such names of dread
As must strike the foe with pallor:
*Hoffmann von Fallersleben* and *Prutz*—
Resounding names of valour.

The cutter *Freiligrath* was there;
Her figure-head was a meet one:
The Moorish king, like an ebony moon,
Was carved on the prow to greet one.

And *Gustav Schwab* went sailing along,
With *Pfizer*, and *Kölle* and *Mayer;*
Each bearing the form of a Swabian bold,
Who strummed on a wooden lyre.

The brig *Birch-Pfeiffer* flew from her mast
The famous ensign olden
Of the Admiralty: it flaunted free
Its tatters red-black-golden.

In jackets short, and in tarry hats,
We swarmed up the bowsprit, which is
The right sort of thing for a sailor to do,
And we sported nautical breeches.

And many a decent married man,
Who had drunk but tea, grown haler,
Now chewed his tobacco and swallowed his rum,
And swore like a true-bred sailor.

On the good old fire-ship's ancient deck—
On the *Fallersleben*—many,
When the wind piped up, were as sick as dogs,
But none of them cared a penny.

So sweet was the dream, we had almost won
A naval battle glorious—
When the sun of the morning chased away
Both fleet and dream victorious.

And there we lay in our beds at home,
Our bones stretched out at the dawning;
And, rubbing the sleep from our drowsy eyes,
We muttered, lazily yawning,

"The world is round: what boots it, then,
To sail on the idle billow!
You come at last to the spot you left:
To the selfsame home and pillow."

# ATTA TROLL.

## A SUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

(1841–1842.)

# ATTA TROLL.

## A SUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

(1841–1842.)

### Caput I.

Where the dark encircling mountains
Overtop each other proudly,
Lulled asleep by foaming torrents
Like a dream-begotten picture,

Cauterets, the haunt of fashion,
Nestles whitely in the valley;
On the balconies the ladies,
Lovely ladies, laughing loudly,

Watch a bear and she-bear dancing
To the music of the bagpipes,
In the market-place below them
Where the motley crowd is surging.

It is Atta Troll who dances
With his mate, the swarthy Mumma,
And the wondering Biscayans
Shout and cheer them to the echo.

Stiff and earnest, grave and solemn,
Dances noble Atta Troll;
But his shaggy spouse is wanting
Both in carriage and decorum;

There is even in her dancing,
To my fancy, a suspicion
Of the cancan, and the license
Of the Grand'-Chaumière at Paris.

Even the keeper, honest fellow,
By the chain who holds and leads her,
Marks a something scarcely moral
In the manner of her dancing.

And he often reaches over
With his whip to reprimand her;
Then the swarthy Mumma bellows
Till the mountain echoes waken.

On his pointed cap he carries
Six Madonnas to protect him
From the bullets of his foemen,
Or from lice to shield and guard him.

On his shoulder, brightly coloured
Hangs an altar-cloth that serves him
As a mantle; underneath it
Lurk the pistol and the dagger.

In his youth a monk, in manhood
He became a robber-captain;
Then, to join the two vocations,
Took the service of Don Carlos.

When Don Carlos fled, defeated,
With his Knights of the Round Table,
And his paladins were driven
To pursue an honest calling—

(One, Schnapphahnski, turned an author)—
Then our knight, the Faith's defender,
Started touring through the country,
Leading Atta Troll and Mumma,

Whom he forced to dance in public
On the open market-places:
In the square in fetters dances
Atta Troll at Cauterets!

Atta Troll, who once so proudly
Lodged, a monarch of the desert,
Free and high upon the mountains,
To the lowland rabble dances!

Must for money vile and sordid
Dance and foot it—he aforetime
So invincible and lofty
In the majesty of terror!

On his youth and vanished lordship
Of the forest when he muses,
Dismal growlings surge and rumble
From the soul of Atta Troll.

Grim he looks then, like some swarthy
Moorish prince of Freiligrath;
Bad the drumming of the one is,
Bad the dancing of the other.

But alas! he wakes no pity,
Only laughter. Even Juliet
From the balcony is laughing
At his sad despairing antics.—

Juliet lives upon the surface:
She is French, and shallow-hearted;
But, to look on, how delightful
And enchanting is my Juliet!

For her glances are a lovely
Net of sunbeams in whose meshes
Captive hearts, like little fishes,
Writhe with tenderness and longing.

## Caput II.

That a Moorish prince, created
By our Freiligrath, his yearning
On the kettle-drum should rattle
Till it loudly snaps asunder:

To the drum 'tis most affecting,
To the drum 'tis deeply moving—
But conceive the consternation
When a bear has burst his fetters!

Dumb the laughter, dumb the music;
From the market-place the people
Fly and scurry, shrieking wildly;
Pale and speechless are the ladies.

Yes, the fetters that enslaved him,
Atta Troll at last has riven.
Through the narrow streets he rushes;
Bounding, rushing in his frenzy—

(None so rude as to delay him)—
Up the rocky steep he clambers,
Glances downward, as if mocking,
And is lost among the mountains.

On the market-place forsaken
Stands alone the swarthy Mumma
With her leader. In his fury
To the ground his cap he dashes,

And he tramples the Madonnas
Under foot! He tears the cover
From his hideous naked body;
The ingratitude he curses,

Black and cruel, of the ingrate
Atta Troll; for as a comrade
And a friend has he not used him,
And instructed him in dancing?

All he has, to him he owes it,
Even his life! A hundred thalers
He was offered, offered vainly,
For the skin of Atta Troll!

On the black and wretched Mumma,
Who, a form of silent sorrow,
On her hinder paws imploring,
Stands before him in his passion,

Falls at length his rage and fury
Doubly heavy; and he beats her,
Even names her Queen Christina,
Madame Muños, and Putana.—

'Twas an afternoon of summer
Warm and lovely when it happened,
And the summer night that followed
Fell serenely and superbly.

Half the night I lingered sweetly
On the balcony with Juliet,
With my Juliet gazing upward
To the golden stars above her.

And she sighed, and said, "In Paris,
Ah! the stars are surely fairest:
Of a winter evening mirrored
In the streets and in the puddles."

## Caput III.

A fantastic dream begotten
Of the summer night! As aimless
Is my song as life or love is,
As Creator, as creation!

Guided only by his pleasure,
Whether galloping or flying,
Through the realm of fancy courses
My beloved Pegasus—

No laborious, plodding cart-horse,
Virtuous toiler for the people,
But a battle-steed of party
With his wistful stamp and whinny!

Glorious, golden-shod the hoofs are
Of my white, my wingëd charger,
And the reins are strings of pearls,
And I hold them loose and gaily.

Bear me forward at thy fancy
O'er the steep and merry hill-paths,
Where the torrents, loud with menace,
Warn from folly's dark abysses.

Through the silent forests bear me,
Where the solemn oaks rear upward,
And the sweet, primeval legends
From the gnarled roots distil.

I would steep mine eyes and drink there—
Ah, my soul is sick with yearning
For that shining, magic water
That bestoweth sight and knowledge!

I am blind no more! My vision
To the deepest cavern pierces—
To the hole of Atta Troll—
And I understand his language.

Strange! How curiously familiar
In mine ear this speech of bears is!
As a child have I not heard it
In my dear and distant country?

## Caput IV.

Roncesvalles, thou noble valley!
When I hear thy name, the fragrance
Of the blue, forgotten flower
In my heart awakes and quivers!

And the shining dream-world rises
From the dim and vanished ages;
And the great-eyed ghosts regard me
Till I shrink and am afraid!

And, with crash and roar of battle,
Frank and Saracen meet headlong;
As if wounded and despairing,
Rings and echoes Roland's horn.

In the Vale of Roncesvalles,
By the yawning gap of Roland—
Named in honour of the hero
Who, to hew himself a pathway,

With such fierce and deadly fury,
With his trusty sword Duranda,
Smote the rocky wall, that traces
Linger yet to wake our wonder—

There, the mountain gorge o'ershadowed
By the wayward growth of pine-trees,
Deeply hidden in the brushwood,
Is the hole of Atta Troll.

There, his family around him,
He is resting from the labour
Of his flight, and from the sorrows
Of publicity and travel.

Happy meeting! In the cavern
Dearly loved he found his children,
Where with Mumma he begat them—
Four the sons, the daughters twain,

Daughters blond as any parson's,
Sleek and smooth with careful licking;
Brown the boys, alone the youngest
With a single ear of black;

For the youngest was the apple
Of his mother's eye, who, biting
Once his ear by misadventure,
Had for very love devoured it.

'Twas a genial lad and merry,
With a talent for gymnastics:
Turned a somersault as nimbly
As the famous gymnast Massmann.

Sprig of autochthonic culture;
With his mother-tongue contented,
Knowing nothing of the jargon
Of the Greeks or of the Romans;

Fresh and free and gay and artless,
Soap of every sort abhorring,
He revolts as much as Massmann
From the modern craze for washing.

But his gayest self the lad is
When he swarms the tree that rises
From the depths of the abysm
Where the precipice is sheerest,

And that towers to the summit
Where the children gather nightly,
Chatting fondly round their father
In the balmy cool of evening.

Then the old one loves to tell them
His experience of the world:
How that many men and cities
He has seen, and suffered greatly,

Like Laertes' son heroic,
With the difference that always
By his side his spouse, his faithful
Black Penelope, has followed.

Atta Troll would also tell them
Of the huge applause and glory
He had won where men had witnessed
His consummate skill in dancing.

Young and old, he would assure them,
Had acclaimed him long and loudly,
When he danced and pirouetted
To the bagpipes playing sweetly.

More especially the ladies,
Kindly connoisseurs and charming,
Were beside themselves with rapture,
And had smiled on him with favour.

Oh, the vanity of artists!
Even the dancing bear remembers
The display he made in public
With a smirk of satisfaction;

Till, a prey to self-laudation,
And by actual performance
To approve himself no boaster,
But a dancer and a great one,

From the ground he springs, and sudden
On his hinder paws uprearing,
Foots it, dances, as aforetime,
The gavotte, his favourite measure.

Mute, with muzzles wide for wonder,
Gape the young ones while the father,
Leaping strangely, cuts his capers,
Jigs and antics in the moonlight.

## Caput V.

In the hole among his dear ones,
Sick and ailing in his spirit,
On his back lies Atta Troll,
And he sucks his paws and muses:

"Mumma, Mumma, dark-hued pearl
That I fished from out the ocean
Of our life, within its waters
I have lost thee to my sorrow!

"Shall I never more behold thee,
Till, beyond the grave transfigured,
I shall see thy soul untrammelled
By the shaggy locks of earth?

"Ah! ere then might I but lick her,
Lick my Mumma on the muzzle!
Muzzle fair as if anointed
With the sweet of virgin honey!

"Once again to sniff the odour
Clinging only to my Mumma,
To my dear, my swarthy Mumma,
Like the scent of fragrant roses!

"But my Mumma's left to languish
In the fetters of the race
That is known as Man, and prides it
On the lordship of the world.

"Death and hell! Those men so mighty,
Those aristocrats exalted,
Look contemptuously downward
On all animals created;

"Steal our wives from us and children,
Chain us, shamefully entreat us;
Even kill us, in our bodies
And our skins that they may traffic!

"And they deem themselves entitled
To inflict such deeds of evil
On the bears beyond all others,
And they call it Rights of Man!

"Rights of Man, forsooth! Who was it
That enfeoffed you with the rights, then?
Nature? No; for Nature never
Was unnatural to any.

"Rights of Man, forsooth! Who gave you
Then those privileges sacred?
Reason? No; for Reason never
Was unreasonable yet.

"Are ye better, then, than others
O ye men! because your dinners
Must be either boiled or roasted?
We devour our dinners raw.

"But the consequences surely
Are the same—it is not eating
That upraises or ennobles;
Noble is that noble does.

"Are ye better for the reason
That ye cultivate, with profit,
Arts and sciences? We others
Are not altogether fools.

"Were there never learned dogs?—
Never horses who could reckon
Like a councillor of Commerce?
Are not hares the best of drummers?

"Have not beavers gained distinction
In the art of hydrostatics?
Were not storks our benefactors
In the matter of the clyster?

"Are reviews not penned by asses?
Are not monkeys good comedians?
Could a mimic well be greater
Than Batavia the meercat.

"Are the nightingales not singers?
Is not Freiligrath a poet?
Who could sing the lion better
Than his countryman the camel?

"In the noble art of dancing
I am more expert than Raumer
As an author—is his writing
More expert than my performance?

"How, O men! are ye then better
Than we others? Upright, truly,
Ye can hold your heads, but abject
Are the thoughts that crawl within them.

"Are ye better, then, than others,
O ye men! because your skin is
Smooth and shining? That advantage
With the snakes ye have in common.

"Snakes bifurcated ye men are;
I can well conceive the uses
Of your trousers; serpent-naked,
Ye must borrow wool to clothe you.

"Flee and shun them, O my children!
Always shun those bald abortions!
Never trust the thing, my daughters,
That approaches you in breeches!"

I refrain from telling further
How the bear, with giddy notions
Of equality, continued
On the human race to reason.

For, when all is said, I also
Am a man, and I will never
Recapitulate the follies
Which are, after all, offensive.

Yes, a man am I, and better
Than the other mammals surely;
I will never prove a traitor
To the interests of birth.

In the war with other creatures
I will still be staunch and loyal
To my kind, and to the holy
And the inborn Rights of Man.

## Caput VI.

Yet to man, the upper circle
Of creation, there may haply
Be some profit in thus learning
How the lower classes reason.

Yes, beneath us, in the gloomy
Social ranks of woe and sorrow:
In the dumb, the lower, strata,
Brood resentment, pride and want.

What by right of common custom
And by treatises on Nature
Has for ages been established,
Snouts audacious give the lie to.

And this heresy the old ones
Grimly growl into the young ones,
Till Humanity and Culture
Are imperilled on our planet.

"Children!" grumbles Atta Troll,
As uneasily he tosses
On his bed without a blanket,
"Ours at least shall be the Future!

"Were each bear of my opinion—
Thought the other beasts as I do—
With our forces leagued together,
We should fight and throw the tyrants.

"Then the boar would form alliance
With the horse; in love fraternal,
The proboscis elephantine
Would entwine the ox's horn.

"Bears and wolves of every colour,
Goats and monkeys, even hares,
For a time would work in common,
And assured would be our triumph.

"What we need to-day is union—
Union! Union! Disunited,
They enslave us; but, united,
We shall overreach the despots.

"Union! Union! And we conquer;
Vile monopoly shall crumble!
We will found a righteous kingdom
Of the animals at last;

"On the basis we shall found it,
That God's creatures all are equal,
Irrespective of their odour,
Or their hide, or their religion.

"Strict equality! Each donkey
To the highest post entitled;
On the other hand the lion
To the mill the sack shall carry.

"And the dog, although I grant you
He's a fawning servile cur,
Seeing men so long have used him
As no better than a dog,

"Shall regain in our Republic
His inalienable rights,
And, I trust, will soon recover
His nobility of being.

"Yea, the very Jews shall share in
Civic rights, and taste of freedom:
By the law shall be acknowledged
On a par with other mammals.

"Only dancing in the market
For the Jews shall be illegal;
I but mention this amendment
In the interests of art.

"For the race is sadly lacking
In a sense of style: in motion
The severe and plastic misses:
And might spoil the public taste."

## Caput VII.

In his gloomy cavern, gloomy
'Mid the circle of his dear ones,
Atta Troll, thus misanthropic,
Squats and growls, and grinds his teeth.

"Men, conceited, pert *canaille!*
Laugh away! The day of vengeance
Soon must dawn that shall deliver
From your yoke and from your laughter!

"'Twas that bitter-sweet grimacing
Of the mouth that most annoyed me.
Unendurably disgusting
Was that human trick of smiling!

"When I saw that fatal twitching
Of the white, detested faces,
I would sicken with the loathing
And the fierceness of my anger.

"More impertinently far
Than by words, a man discloses
By his smile, his deep and boundless,
Brazen impudence of soul.

"They are always laughing, laughing!—
In their love's most solemn moment,
When the circumstances surely
Call for gravity profound!

"They will even laugh when dancing!
In such bold and shameless fashion
They profane the noble science
One should cherish as a cult.

"Yes, a pious act of worship
In the olden days was dancing;
Round the altar whirled devoutly
Many a priestly form and holy.

"In the ancient days King David
Danced for joy before the Ark;
For the dance was public worship:
Was a prayer with the legs!

"And as such it was my habit
To regard my own performance
When I danced before the people,
And received their loud ovation.

"The applause—I must confess it—
To my heart was often grateful;
To compel the admiration
Of one's enemies is sweet!

"But enthusiasm even
Cannot wean them from their smiling,
Even dancing cannot cure them—
Their frivolity remains."

## CAPUT VIII.

Decent burgesses have often
Smelt offensively, while perfume
Has been shed by royal lackeys—
Ambergris and lavender.

There are virgin souls among us
Who indulge in soaps the vilest,
Whereas vice may be anointed
With the fragrant oil of roses.

Wherefore, gentle reader, sneer not
If the hole of Atta Troll
Be in no way reminiscent
Of the spices of Arabia.

Linger with me, gentle reader,
In that air of heavy odours,
While our hero offers counsel
To his son as from a cloud:—

"Child, my child, the latest offshoot
Of my life, toward my muzzle
Lean thy single ear, attentive
To my earnest words and solemn!

"To the human mode of thinking
Never yield assent: 'twill ruin
Soul and body; for among them
Not a man is worth the name.

"Even the Germans, once the noblest:
The descendants of Tuisco,
And our own primeval cousins:
For the worse have altered sadly.

"They are creedless now and godless;
They are atheistic ranters—
Child, my child, avoid the errors
Both of Feuerbach and Bauer!

"Be no atheistic, monstrous
Bear-abortion, the Creator
With irreverence regarding—
'Twas a God who made the world.

"Sun and moon in heaven above us,
Stars and planets—tailed and tailless—
One and all reflect the radiance
Of the everlasting power;

"While, below, both land and ocean
Are the echo of His glory;
Every creature sings the praises
Of His majesty divine.

"Even the silver louse, the smallest,
On the bearded holy pilgrim,
Shares the mortal, earthly sojourn:
The eternal pæan hymns!

"In yon shining star-pavilion,
On a golden throne exalted,
World-controlling and majestic,
Sits a Polar Bear colossal.

"And His coat is fair and spotless,
White and gleaming; and His forehead
Wears a diamond crown that sparkles
To the utmost ends of heaven.

"On His face, serene, harmonious,
Rest the silent deeds of thought;
At a signal from His sceptre
All the spheres resounding sing.

"At His feet in lowly worship
Sit the sainted bears who meekly
On the earth endured, upholding
In their paws the martyr's palm.

"First the one and then the other,
As the Holy Spirit moves them,
Leaping up in jubilation,
Joins the sacred dance, adoring:

"Dance divine, where grace effulgent
Renders talent quite superfluous;
Where the soul for very rapture
From the skin is fain to leap.

"Oh shall I, unworthy Troll,
Share the joys of the redemption,
Far to realms of bliss translated
From these mean and earthly sorrows?

"In the star-pavilion yonder,
Heaven-drunken shall I also
With the palm and with the halo
Dance in awe before the Throne?"

## Caput IX.

Like the tongue of flaming scarlet
That some swarthy Moorish monarch
Of our Freiligrath, in anger,
From his mocking mouth might point us,

From the dark and lowering heaven
Steps the moon; while night re-echoes
With the sullen, sleepless thunder
Of the everlasting torrents.

On the rock he always chooses,
Perched aloft stands Atta Troll,
Howling lonely to the night-wind,
And the depths of the abysses.

"Yes, a bear am I; I own it:
Just a bear, a common bear—
Growler, Isegrimm, and Bruin—
Heaven knows the names ye call me.

"Yes, a bear am I; I own it:
Just the beast uncouth and clumsy,
The ungainly dromedary
Of your cruel scorn and laughter.

"Yes, I serve your wit for target:
Am the monster with whose terrors
Of a night ye scare your children,
Scare your naughty human children.

"I am he whose form distorted
In your nursery lore has figured.
Loud and boldly I proclaim it
To the despicable world.

"Hear and mark: I am a bear,
Of my origin ashamed not;—
Am as proud as if descended
From a Moses Mendelssohn!"

## Caput X.

Pushing forward on all fours,
Savage, fierce, a pair of figures
Force a pathway, pioneering
Through the forest-depths at midnight.

It is Atta Troll, the father,
With his youngest son, Sir One-Ear.
Where the moonlight glimmers faintly
By the stone of blood they halt.

"Once this stone," growls Atta Troll,
"Was the altar where the Druids
In an age of superstition
Offered human sacrifices.

"Oh, the ghastly, gruesome horror!
Why, my hair, uprising, bristles
On my back to think that ever
God was glorified by murder!

"Grown toward a clearer vision,
It is true that men no longer
Slay each other, fiercely zealous
In the interests of heaven.

"'Tis no more a dream fantastic,
Foolish frenzy, fond delusion:
'Tis the love of self constrains them
Now to homicide and slaughter.

"After worldly wealth and treasure
Now they strive as for a wager,
Each purloining and amassing
In an endless brawl and scuffle.

"Yes, the earth we all inherit
Has been seized by private plunder,
And the thief discourses blandly
On the rights of private owners.

"Rights of property, forsooth!
Oh, the robbers and the liars!
None but man could have invented
Craft and folly so compounded.

"'Twas no paltry private owner
Made the earth that we inhabit;
Never yet was mortal born
With a pocket in his skin.

"None was ever born provided
With a little bag at birth
In his body's outer garment,
For concealing what he pilfered.

"Only man, the smooth, the furless,
Who so artfully has clothed him
In the wool of other creatures,
Had the art to plan a pocket.

"As unnatural are pockets
As the ownership they further:
As the right to stolen treasure—
Man's a pocket-picking knave.

"Oh, my hate is deep and burning!
I bequeath to thee my hatred.
Oh, my son, upon this altar
Swear eternal hate to man!

"Be the mortal foe, I charge thee:
Foe implacable and deadly:
Of the wicked, vile oppressors.
Swear it, swear it, O my son!"

So, like Hannibal, the stripling
Swore the oath. The moon shone yellow
On the grisly stone of slaughter
And the misanthropic couple.

How the youthful bear unbroken
Kept his solemn oath we'll tell you,
To his praise another epic
On our lyre anon entuning.

As for Atta Troll, him also
We will turn from now, that later
We may find him all the surer
With the death-bestowing bullet.

Thou hast come to the conclusion
Of thy brief against the glory
Of humanity; to-morrow
As a traitor thou shalt perish.

## CAPUT XI.

Ranged like bayaderes in slumber,
Clad in white and filmy garments
By the winds of morning ruffled,
Lie the mountains drear and chilly.

But the sun-god, rising golden,
Wakes them gaily with his greeting,
And their cloudy raiment scatters,
Till they shine in naked beauty.

At the dawn of day I started,
Started hunting with Lascaro
For the bear. 'Twas noon already
When we reached the Pont-d'Espagne:

When we reached the bridge that crosses
Into Spain, into the country
Of those savage West-barbarians
Who, in social modes and customs,

Lag a thousand years behind—
In the Fatherland we others,
We barbarians of the East,
Have but lingered for a hundred.

With a doubting foot and fearful
I forsook the soil of France,
France, the home of light and freedom
And of women that I love.

On the bridge an aged Spaniard
Sat in squalor; want was peeping
Through the tatters of his mantle,
There was famine in his eye.

And he strummed with bony fingers
On a mandoline—an old one—
Till the discords shrilled and clamoured
Through the deep, re-echoing gorges.

And he leaned at times and nodded,
Laughing down to the abysses;
Then would strum the wilder, singing
To his music strange this song:

"There's a little golden table,
And it stands within my heart;
And around the golden table
Are four little golden chairs.

"On the golden chairs are seated
Little ladies playing cards,
Golden arrows in their chignons;
And my Clara always wins,

"Plays and wins with roguish laughter.
Ah! my Clara, none but thee
In my heart could be the victor,
All the trumps are in thy hand."—

As I passed I murmured, musing,
"Strange that madness should be singing
On the bridge that crosses over
To the land of Spain from France!

"Is yon crazy fool an emblem
Of what follows when the nations
Try to interchange ideas?—
Or his country's title-page?"

To the dusk the day was darkening
When we reached the mean Posada.
There we found the Spanish hotch-potch
In the dirty vessel steaming.

And my supper was of chick-peas,
Heavy, big, like rifle bullets,
Taxing even the digestion
Of a German reared on dumplings.

Fitting sequel to the cooking
Was the bed with insects peppered—
Ah! the foes most dire and deadly
Of the human race are bugs.

What are elephants, a thousand,
In comparison, for fury,
With a single little bug
Crawling, creeping on the blanket?

If you let him meekly bite you
'Tis an evil—but a greater
'Tis to crush him, for he'll plague you
All the night long with his odour.

Yes, there's nothing in the world
Worse than fighting filthy vermin,
With their stench alone for weapon—
Oh, the duel with a bug!

## Caput XII.

How the poets, even the tame ones,
Rave and rhapsodize on Nature:
Singing, saying that our world
Is the temple of the Lord,

Bearing witness in its splendour
To the glory of the Maker,
Sun and moon and stars above us,
In the dome as lamps suspended.

All the same, my worthy poets,
Ye must own that inconvenient
Are the stairways of the temple—
Oh, the squalid crooked stairs!

All this toil o'er hill and hollow,
All this leaping over boulders,
Is a trial most exhausting
To my legs and to my spirit.

By my side Lascaro plodded,
Long and sallow, like a taper,
Never speaking, never laughing:
Dead, they say,—a witch's son.

Yes, the story runs he perished
Long ago, and by the magic
Of his mother, old Uraka,
Masquerades among the living.

Oh, the cursed temple stairway!
To this day I often marvel,
Recollecting those abysses,
That my neck escaped unbroken.

How the torrents roared and shouted!
How the pines beneath the scourging
Of the tempest howled! The heavens
Crashed and thundered—fearful weather!

In the little fisher's cottage
On the Lac-de-Gobe a shelter
We discovered, with some trout
That were excellent and toothsome.

In an easy-chair, on cushions,
Sat the ferryman reclining,
Grey and sick; his pretty nieces
Like a pair of angels nursed him:

Sturdy angels, somewhat Flemish—
Might indeed have stepped to greet us
From a Rubens; clear and healthy
Were their eyes; their hair was golden.

In their dimpled cheeks of damask
Peeped and lurked the roguish laughter;
Strong, voluptuous their limbs were,
Waking fear as well as pleasure.

Charming, pretty, kindly creatures,
Sweetly quarrelling together
As to what the sickly uncle
For a drink the most would relish.

While the one a goblet offers
Filled with brew of linden blossom,
Just as pressing is the other
With her elder-flower decoction.

"I will drink to-day of neither,"
Cried the old man, out of patience;
"Fetch me wine, that something better
I may taste and give my guests."

Whether wine indeed I drank there
By the Lac-de-Gobe, I know not.
If in Brunswick I had met it,
I had taken it for mum.

Made of goat-skin black and goodly
Was the bottle—stinking foully;
But the old man drank delighted,
And grew cheerier and haler.

He recounted the achievements
Of the smugglers and banditti,
Who live merrily and freely
In the Pyrenean forests.

In the hoarier traditions
He was also versed, and told us
Of the battles of the giants
With the bears in times primeval.

Yes, before the immigration
Of the human race, the giants
Fought the bears to win the lordship
Of the forests and the valleys.

But when man arrived, the giants
Fled in panic from the country,
For such heads, although enormous,
Are not overcharged with brain.

Having reached at last the ocean,
And perceiving heaven mirrored
In the blue and shining water—
Then the fools, they tell us, thinking

That the water blue was heaven,
Pushing forward, tumbled headlong
In the sea, and, trusting blindly
In the care of God, were drowned.

While the bears by human prowess
Are exterminated slowly.
Year by year their number dwindles,
And they vanish from the mountains.

"So on earth," observed the speaker,
"One is ousted by the other.
When the human race has perished,
Then the dwarfs will be the masters;

"Clever, thrifty little people,
In the bosom of the mountains,
Busy gathering and picking
In the rich and golden gorges.

"How they peep through every crevice,
With their tiny heads and cunning!
I have seen them in the moonlight,
And I tremble for the future.

"Ah, that power gold-begotten
Of the pigmies! Will our sons,
Like the giants, fleeing headlong,
In a watery heaven perish?"

## Caput XIII.

In the black and rocky cauldron
Lie the lake's unfathomed waters;
Pale and melancholy stars
Gaze from heaven. Night and silence.

Night and silence. Splash of oars;
And the skiff, a murmuring secret,
Floats along; the pretty nieces
Play the ferryman, to speed us.

Brisk and gay the swinging oars.
In the dark beneath the starlight
Gleam the bare and strenuous arms,
Glance and gleam the eyes of blue.

And beside me sits Lascaro
Pale as ever, still and speechless,
And the fancy shudders through me:
Can the man indeed be dead?

Am I dead myself, and sailing
To the darksome under-world,
With these ghost-companions steering
To the chilly realm of shadows?

Is this lake the gloomy water
Of the Styx? Has Proserpine,
Disappointed of her Charon,
Sent her maidens forth to fetch me?

Nay, I am not dead; within me
Unextinguished, unabated,
Leaps the vital flame exultant,
In my soul it burns and blazes.

And these maidens, blithely pulling
At the oars with jest and laughter,
Who besprinkle me with water,
As it splashes showering upward:

These robust and blooming wenches
Are no pallid forms and ghostly,
Maidens wan of Proserpine,
Shadow-maidens sent from hell!

To convince my doubting senses
That the upper-world their home was,
And, by facts, my faith to strengthen
In my own abundant life,

With my lips I leaned, and pressed them
On the dimpled cheeks and rosy,
And I reasoned, syllogising:
Yes, I kiss: am therefore living.

And once more I kissed the maidens
When we reached the shore, at parting.
In no other coin but this one
Would they let me pay my passage.

## Caput XIV.

From the sunny golden hollows
Laughed the violet-tinted mountains.
To the slope, aloft and fearless,
Clung a hamlet, like a nest.

Thither climbing, I discovered
That the parent birds were flown,
And that none were left but young ones,
Scarcely winged as yet for flying;

Pretty boys and little maidens,
Almost hid in woollen bonnets
White and scarlet. They were playing
At a wedding in the square.

Undisturbed the game continued,
And I saw the princely lover
Kneel, incarnate in a mouse,
To the cat-king's lovely daughter.

Luckless prince! He's joined in marriage
To the fair one. Fierce and shrewish,
She has bitten and devoured him.
With his death the game is over.

Well-nigh all the day I lingered
With the children, and we chattered
Frank and friendly, and they asked me
Who I was, and my profession.

"Little friends, my native country
Is called Germany," I answered.
"'Tis a land where bears are plenty:
I have hunted many a bear.

"I have caught and skinned them often:
Pulled the skin the bear-ears over:
By the paws of bears have often
Been most cruelly maltreated.

"But my soul grew sick and weary
Of the daily bout and wrestle
With the unlicked cubs that flourish
In the land I love so dearly.

"So I rose and journeyed hither
In the search of better quarry;
Now I go my strength to measure
With the mighty Atta Troll.

"Him I deem a noble foeman
Worth the fighting. Ah, how often
In my home I've won a battle
Where the victory has shamed me!"

When I turned at last to leave them,
In a ring the little creatures
Danced and circled round me, singing,
"Girofflino, Girofflette!"

Then the youngest, sweet and saucy,
Stepping forward, stood before me:
Curtsied twice and thrice and four times,
And she raised her voice and sang,

"If the king should chance to meet me,
Twice I curtsy to the king.
If the queen should chance to meet me,
Then I drop her curtsies three.

"If I chance to meet the devil,
See him coming with his horn,
Curtsies two, three, four, I make him—
Girofflino, Girofflette!"

"Girofflino, Girofflette!"
The refrain was sung in chorus,
And the chorus and the dancing
Circled teasing round my legs.

As I wound towards the valley,
I could hear the echo follow
Like the sound of birds a-twitter—
"Girofflino, Girofflette!"

## Caput XV.

Rocky boulders, huge, misshapen,
Grimly twisted and gigantic,
Gaze and frown on me like monsters
Turned to stone in times primeval.

And how strange! The clouds above them,
Grey and weary, drift like wraiths:
Flimsy counterfeit presentments
Of those savage, stony figures.

From afar the torrent rages;
Winds are roaring through the pine-wood—
Sounds implacable and cruel,
And as fatal as despair.

Dreary solitudes and awful!
On the firs decayed and rotten
Throng the sable-suited jackdaws,
Flapping languid wings and feeble.

And Lascaro walks beside me
Pale and silent. A beholder
Might imagine I was Madness
In the company of Death.

'Tis a hateful, barren region.
Does it lie beneath some ban?
Yonder stunted tree is surely
Red and bloody round the root.

And the hut beneath its shadow,
In the earth for shame half hidden,
Has a roof of straw that gazes,
As in abject prayer, upward.

The inhabitants are Cagots:
Wretched folk—the sorry remnant
Of a race engulfed in darkness,
Lingering on, though trodden under.

For the hearts of the Biscayans
Still are gnawed by secret horror
Of those Cagots: gloomy relic
Of the days of superstition.

In the Minster of Bagnères
Lurks a narrow, grated portal
Which, the Sacristan informed us,
Was the door reserved for Cagots.

Other access to the building
Was aforetime interdicted;
Furtive-footed they must enter
Even the temple of their Maker.

On a lowly footstool yonder
Sat the Cagot at his prayers,
From the other folk who worshipped
Set apart, as if infected.

But the consecrated tapers
Of our century burn brightly,
And have chased away the terror
Of the mediæval shadows!—

At the door Lascaro waited
While I slipped into the hovel
Of the Cagots: to a brother
Gave my hand in friendly greeting.

And I kissed the tiny baby
That was sucking at the bosom
Of his wife, and clinging closely
Like a sickly little spider.

## Caput XVI.

When you see these mountain summits
From afar, they glance and sparkle
As if decked in gold and purple,
In the sunlight, proud and regal.

But the splendour fades when nearer,
For with this, as with so many
Of the glories of the world,
'Tis the play of light deludes you.

And what golden seemed and purple
In the distance, now is snow—
Merely snow, that, dull and fretful,
Finds the hours too long and lonely.

Where I walked I heard above me
How the crepitating snow,
To the callous wind and chilly,
Wailed and sighed its white despair.

"In this barren waste," it murmured,
"Ah, how slow the hours in passing!
Frozen eternities the hours are,
So interminable, weary.

" Never snow was so unhappy!
If, instead of on these mountains,
I had only fallen yonder
In the vale, where flowers blossom!

" I had melted to a streamlet,
Where the fairest village maiden,
Leaning lovely o'er my water,
Might have washed her face with laughter.

" Yes, and haply flowing seaward,
To a pearl I might have changed me,
And effulgent shone for ever
On some golden, kingly crown."

But I answered, having hearkened
To its plaining, " Dearest snow,
Much I doubt if such a future
Had been thine in yonder valley;

" Wherefore comfort thee. Not many
Are transmuted into pearls.
In some puddle, maybe falling,
Into slime thou hadst been trampled."

While I held this conversation
With the snow, a shot resounded;
On a sudden from the heavens
Dropped a tawny vulture headlong.

'Twas a joke of friend Lascaro's:
Just a sportsman making merry.
Stern and fixed his face as ever,
But his gun was hot and smoking.

From the tail he tore a feather,
And without a word he stuck it
On his pointed cap of felt,
And again went striding forward.

Most uncanny was the picture,
As his shadow with the feather
Moved along against the whiteness
Of the gleaming snowy summits.

## Caput XVII.

Like a lane there runs a valley
Which they call the Pass of Spirits.
Dizzy precipices bound it,
Rising ruggedly and sheer.

From that awful slope the hovel
Of Uraka, like a watch-tower,
Views the valley. Thither wending,
In Lascaro's wake I followed.

By a code of secret signals
He consulted with his mother
As to methods for enticing
And for slaying Atta Troll.

For, his trail with zeal pursuing,
We had tracked him down so surely,
That no loop-hole now was left him.
Atta Troll, thy days are numbered!

Whether old Uraka really
Was a witch of wondrous powers,
And as potent as the people
Of the Pyrenees asserted,

I will never try to settle;
But I know that her exterior
Was suspicious; most suspicious
Were her bloodshot eyes and rheumy.

Evil, squinting, were her glances.
If a cow, it was reported,
She but glanced at, on a sudden
Dried the milk within its udder.

They maintained that swine the fattest,
Nay, the strongest oxen even,
She could kill by merely stroking
With her wrinkled, bony fingers.

For such crimes they would accuse her
To the Justice of the peace;
But that worthy man, it happened,
Was a follower of Voltaire:

Just a modern, shallow worldling,
Neither pious nor profound,
Who would turn away the plaintiff,
Disbelieving, almost scoffing.

Quite an honest occupation
Was ostensibly Uraka's,
For she dealt in mountain-simples,
And the birds she stuffed for selling.

Full of specimens her hut was,
Vile with scent of cuckoo-flowers,
Mixed with rupture-wort and henbane
And with withered elder-blossom.

A collection, too, of vultures
Was most cleverly displayed,
With the pinions stretched for flying,
And the horrid monster beaks.

By the stupefying odour
Was my brain perhaps bewildered,
That I gazed upon the vultures
With an odd, uncanny feeling?

There are maybe men accursëd
Pining, prisoned in the semblance
Of those stuffed, unhappy creatures,
Held in durance vile by magic.

With a look so fixed and mournful,
Yet impatient they regard me!
And I seem to see them squinting
At the witch with furtive glances.

But the witch, the old Uraka,
In the chimney-corner cowers,
Melting lead and casting bullets,
By her side her son Lascaro:

Casting fatal bullets destined
For the death of Atta Troll.
On the witch's face how swiftly
Dance the leaping flames, and quiver?

With her thin old lips she murmurs
Low and toneless, never pausing.
Is she crooning incantations
On the casting of the bullets?

To her son she nods and chuckles,
But, unmoved and unregarding
He pursues his work as grimly
And as silently as death.—

Filled with horror and misgiving
I approached the window, panting
For the air, and viewed the valley
Stretching far and wide below me.

What I saw that awful midnight,
'Twixt the hours of twelve and one,
I will tell you fairly, fitly,
In the chapter that shall follow.

## Caput XVIII.

And it was the time of full moon,
On Saint John the Baptist's eve,
That the spectral hunt went coursing
Through the Spirit-Pass at midnight.

From the witch-nest of Uraka,
From the window, quite distinctly
I could see the ghostly legion
As it sped along the valley.

'Twas a perfect post for viewing,
From above, the hurrying pageant;
And I saw the dead uprisen
Riding forth upon their pleasure.

Crack of whips, hallooing, shouting!
Barking hounds and neighing horses!
Winding horns and merry laughter!
How triumphantly it echoed!

Bounding forward like a vanguard
Flew the strange fantastic quarry:
Stags and boars in herds careering,
The pursuing hounds behind them.

Sportsmen strangely met together
Out of sundered climes and ages;
Hard by Nimrod of Assyria
Rode, for instance, Charles X.

High on milk-white chargers seated,
On they rushed. Piqueurs with leashes
Swift afoot came running after,
And the pages with the torches.

In the wild procession many
Seemed familiar—yonder horseman
In the golden harness gleaming,
Was not he the great King Arthur?

And Sir Ogier, he of Denmark,
Wore he not that iridescent
Coat of mail, in which he glimmered
Like a frog gigantic, greenly?

In the train was many a hero
For his thought and learning famous.
By his glance of genial brightness
I identified our Wolfgang—

For, since Hengstenberg has damned him,
In his grave he cannot slumber,
And with pagans now indulges
In the chase he loved while living.

And I recognised that William
By his smiling mouth and gracious,
Whom the puritanic spirit
Held, no less, as one accursëd.

Forth must ride this sinner also,
On a coal-black charger mounted,
While, beside him on a donkey,
Rides a man——And holy Heaven!

By his meek and pious manner,
And his white and worthy nightcap,
By his anguished soul I knew him,
Knew our former friend, Franz Horn.

For his commentaries written
On that worldling, William Shakespeare,
He must share—the poor old creature—
In that wild, tumultuous hunting!

He must ride, this Franz so peaceful,
Who for walking scarce had courage,
Active only at his prayers,
Or when talking over tea-cups!

With what horror will the spinsters
Whose caresses cheered his leisure
Learn that Franz—their Franz beloved—
Is a wild and reckless hunter!

When they break into a gallop,
Mocking glances fall from William
On the wretched commentator
Trotting after on his donkey.

Weak and pitifully helpless,
Clinging closely to the pommel,
Faithful dead, no less than living,
Still he follows up his author.

There were many ladies also
In that ghostly train fantastic:
Slender nymphs whose youthful bodies
Were a miracle of beauty,

Set astride upon their horses,
Mythologically naked,
But whom ringlets long and flowing,
Like a golden mantle, covered.

On their heads were twisted garlands,
And in gay, abandoned postures,
Backward leaning, bold and merry,
Leafy wands they swung and balanced.

Tightly habited beside them,
Mediæval damosels
Sat obliquely on their saddles,
On the wrist a chainëd falcon.

On their skinny palfreys mounted,
As in parody, behind them
Came a cavalcade of women,
Like comedians, decked, bedizened.

Very lovely were their faces,
If, perchance, a trifle brazen;
And they cried and clamoured madly,
With their rouged and wanton cheeks.

How the echoes rang, rejoicing!
Winding horns and merry laughter!
Bark of dogs and horses neighing!
Crack of whips, hallooing, shouting!

## Caput XIX.

Three were fair as beauty's trefoil,
Far excelling all the others:
Gracious forms of lovely women—
Ah, I never shall forget them!

Unmistakable the first was,
From the crescent on her forehead;
Pure and proudly, like a statue,
Rode and passed the mighty goddess.

High upgirdled was her tunic,
Veiling half the hips and bosom;
On her white voluptuous body
Played the torch-light and the moonlight.

White as marble was her face, too,
And as cold as marble; fearful
Were the fixity and pallor
Of the stern and noble features.

But within her eye of shadow
Leapt and flamed an awful fire,
Sweet, uncanny, and mysterious,
Spirit-blinding and consuming.

Ah! how altered is Diana:
She who changed the young Actæon
To a stag, for dogs to mangle,
In her chastity unbending.

Does she expiate her error
'Mid this company licentious?
Like the frailest among mortals
Now, a ghost, by night she travels.

Late, indeed, yet all the fiercer
In her heart desire awakens,
In her eyes it burns devouring
Like a very brand of hell.

For she rues the vanished ages
When the men were nobler, fairer:
Seeks, in numbers, compensation
Now that quality has dwindled.

By her side there rode a beauty
From whose features, less severely
On the classic model chiselled,
Shone the Celtic grace and charm.

'Twas the lovely fay Abunde,
And I knew her, knew her straightway,
By the sweetness of her smiling,
By her mad and merry laughter.

Ah, the blooming face and rosy,
Such as Greuze had haply painted!
Like a heart her mouth, and open,
With enchanting pearly teeth.

And her gown was blue; it fluttered,
For the wind was fain to lift it.
In the fairest of my visions
I have never seen such shoulders.

From the window, in my longing,
I had almost leapt to kiss her—
And my neck had surely broken
In the hazardous adventure.

Ah! if bleeding I had fallen
At her feet in the abysses,
She had only laughed—such laughter
I have heard, alas! too often!

Was the third, the third and fairest
Of the women that so deeply
And so strangely stirred my bosom,
But a devil like the others?

Whether fiend she was, or angel,
For my life I could not tell you.
It is hard to say, with women,
Where the fiend in angel merges.

On her face aglow with fever,
Lay the Morning-land's enchantment,
And her costly robes reminded
Of the tales of Scheherazade.

And her lips were like pomegranates,
And her nose a curving lily,
And her limbs were cool and slender
As the palm in the oasis.

On a palfrey white she rode,
Led by negroes twain who trotted
Swift afoot beside the princess,
By the golden bridle holding.

Oh, in truth, a royal lady
Was the queen of old Judæa:
Herod's lovely wife who lusted
For the head of John the Baptist!

For this deed of blood accursëd,
As a night-tormented spirit
She must join the rout and gallop
Till the final day of doom.

In her hand she holds the charger
With the head of John the Baptist,
Holds it evermore and kisses,
Yes, she kisses it with fervour.

For she loved Saint John the Baptist;
Though it stand not in the Bible,
'Mongst the folk the legend lingers
Of Herodias' bloody passion.

'Tis the only supposition
That explains the lady's longing.
Will a woman ask the head
Of a man she does not love?

She was maybe wroth a little
With her lover—cut his head off;
But when, bleeding on the charger,
She had won the head so precious,

Wildly weeping she went crazy,
Wept and died of love's delirium—
(Love's delirium! Phrase redundant!
Love—delirium—they are one!)

From the grave uprising nightly,
As I said, she rides a-hunting,
In her hand the bloody charger;
Yet, with woman's mad caprice,

Now and then with childish laughter
She will hurl the gruesome burden
Through the air, and catch it lightly
And adroitly like a plaything.

As she galloped past she saw me;
And her nod was so coquettish
And so languishing, that deeply
To its core my heart was shaken.

Thrice the cavalcade went surging,
As I watched, before my window,
And the lovely ghost in passing
Nodded thrice to me in greeting.

When the hunting throng had vanished,
And the tumult sunk to silence,
Still the sweetness of that greeting
Burned and smouldered in my brain.

And the livelong night I tumbled,
Tossing fevered limbs and weary
On the straw—Uraka's hovel
Was unblest with beds of down;—

And I mused upon the meaning
Of that strange, mysterious greeting.
Why so tenderly and softly
Didst thou gaze on me, Herodias?

## Caput XX.

Sunrise. Golden arrows aiming
At the mists which whitely hover,
Till they redden as if wounded,
And dissolve in light and splendour.

So the struggle ends in triumph,
And the day, the mighty victor,
Plants his foot in dazzling glory
On the vanquished mountain's neck.

And the noisy feathered people
In their hidden houses twitter,
And a smell of herbs arises
Like a concert of sweet odours.

With the early dawn we started,
And descended to the valley.
While Lascaro followed nimbly
On the traces of his bear,

I made shift to speed the passage
Of the moments with my musing.
Thought, however, only wearied,
Also saddened me a little.

Weary, sad, at last I flung me
On a soft and mossy bed
By a great ash overshadowed,
Where a little brook was flowing.

The mysterious, gentle murmur
Fooled and charmed my soul so strangely,
That the thoughts I had been thinking
From my head entirely faded.

And a frantic yearning filled me
For a dream, for death, for madness,
For those fair and phantom riders
In the cavalcade of ghosts.

Oh, ye lovely midnight faces
That the fires of morning banished,
I would know where ye have fleeted,
Where by day ye have your dwelling!

Under ruins of old temples,
In the ancient far Romagna
Hides Diana (so they tell us)
From the noonday sway of Christ.

In the dark of midnight only
From her hiding-place she ventures:
Tastes again the joy of hunting,
With her pagan playmates riding.

And the lovely fay Abunde,
Of the Nazarenes mistrustful,
Through the sunlit hours seeks shelter
In the Isle of Avalon.

In that magic island hidden
In the far and quiet ocean
Of Romance, that none can win to
Save on wingëd steeds of fable:

By whose shore care never anchors,
Where no steamer ever calls,
Landing Philistines intrusive,
Pipe in mouth, intent on prying:

Where no echo ever pierces
From our tiresome gloomy bells,
With their dreary ding-dong jangle
So detested by the fairies.

There, in mirth and joy untroubled,
And in youth that blooms immortal,
Dwells our sweet and merry lady,
Dwells our gay and blonde Abunde.

And she strolls with happy laughter,
While the sunflowers nod above her,
Wooing Paladins for courtiers,
Long departed from the earth.

Ah! but thou, Herodias, tell me
Where thou tarriest?—I know it!
Thou art dead, and liest buried
By the town Jerusalem.

With the dead by day thou sleepest
In thy cold and marble coffin;
But at midnight thou awakest
To the crack of whips and shouting;

And the frantic host thou joinest,
With Diana and Abunde,
With thy merry fellow-hunters,
Who abhor both cross and anguish.

Ah, companionship how blissful!
Could I only follow after
Through the forests! Thou, Herodias,
Art the one that I would ride by!

For 'tis thou I love the dearest!
More than stately Grecian goddess,
More than laughing northland fairy,
I adore thee, Jewess dead!

Yes, I love thee! By the trembling
Of my soul I know I love thee.
Love thou me, and be my darling,
Sweet Herodias, fairest woman!

Love thou me, and be my darling!
Hurl away the bloody charger
With the stupid head, and glut thee
On a dish of better savour.

I am just the knight thou needest—
What care I that damned already,
Dead and damned thou art for ever—
Free from prejudice am I—

As regards my own salvation
There's some hitch, I rather fancy,
I am often very doubtful
Of my place among the living.

As thy faithful knight engage me—
As thy *cavalier servente*—
I will bear thy mantle gladly,
And thy whims, without a murmur.

Every midnight I will gallop
In the reckless rout beside thee;
We will talk and laugh together
At my wild and foolish speeches.

I will while away and shorten
Thus the night; but joy will vanish
With the dawn of day; then, weeping,
I will sit upon thy tomb.

I will sit me down and weep there
On the crumbled tomb of kings,
On the grave of my beloved,
By the town Jerusalem.

And the ancient Jews, in passing,
Will imagine that I mourn
The destruction of the Temple
And the town Jerusalem.

## Caput XXI.

Argonauts without a ship,
Launched afoot upon the mountains,
And, in lieu of golden fleece,
Aiming only at a bear-skin—

We are poor and paltry devils,
Of the modern cut heroic,
And no classic bard will ever
In his song immortalize us.

Yet we none the less encountered
Many a peril! What a deluge
Overwhelmed us on the summit,
Far from trees and hackney-coaches.

What a storm! The floods were loosened,
And the rain came down in buckets!
Such a shower-bath on Colchis
Surely never wetted Jason.

"An umbrella!" loud I shouted.
"Six-and-thirty kings and kingdoms
For the use of an umbrella!"
And the rain still pelted on.

Long the night had seen us toiling
When we reached the witch's cottage,
Very cross and deadly weary,
Like a pair of dripping poodles.

On the fire-lit hearth Uraka
Sat industriously combing
At her pug obese, ungainly;
But she speedily dismissed him

To attend to our requirements,
And my bed was shortly ready.
Then she loosed my espardilloes,
That uncomfortable foot-gear;

And she helped me with undressing:
Drew my trousers off that clung
To my legs, as close and faithful
As the friendship of a fool.

"Now, a dressing-gown!" I shouted,
(On my back my shirt was steaming),
"Six-and-thirty kings and kingdoms
For a dressing-gown—a dry one!"

For a space I stood and shivered
On the hearth, with teeth that chattered,
Till, bewildered by the firelight,
On the straw at last I sank.

Sleep I could not, but kept blinking
At the witch beside the chimney,
On whose lap her son was leaning
With his shoulder while she stripped him.

By her side the pug ungainly
Stood erect upon his haunches,
With his forepaws very deftly
Holding up a little goblet,

While Uraka from the goblet
Took a reddish fat, and rubbed it
On the ribs and on the shoulders
Of her son with trembling haste.

As she rubbed she crooned and murmured,
Crooned a lullaby to soothe him,
Through her nose, while up the chimney
Leapt the flames and crackled weirdly.

Like a corpse, so thin and yellow,
Lay the son against the mother,
Sad as death, with eyes unseeing
Widely open, pale and stony.

Can the man be dead indeed, then?
Does the love maternal nightly
To enchanted life restore him
With this potent magic ointment?

Strange the wakeful sleep of fever!
Weary limbs in leaden fetters,
And the senses overwrought,
And so horribly awake!

How I suffer from the odour
Of those pungent herbs and simples!
I have smelt the like already,
But in vain I wonder where.

How I fear the wind that's howling
In the chimney!—like the sighing
Of poor parched and withered ghosts—
And the voices seem familiar.

But my torment was the greatest
From the birds that, stuffed and life-like
On a shelf were ranged above me
Near the place where I was lying.

With a slow and horrid motion
Of the wings they stooped towards me,
Craning down towards my pillow
With their beaks like human noses.

Ah, such noses! Where already
Have I seen such beaks? At Hamburg?
Or at Frankfort in the Ghetto?
Reminiscence dim, unhappy!

Sleep completely overpowered me
In the end, and, in the place of
Wakeful fantasies of fever,
Came a deep and healthy dream.

In my dream the wretched hovel
All at once became a ball-room
Carried high on lofty columns,
And by candelabra lighted.

There invisible musicians
Played, from *Robert-le-Diable*,
The abandoned wanton dances
Of the nuns. I was alone.

But at last the doors were opened,
And, advancing up the ball-room,
Pacing solemnly and slowly,
Entered guests the most amazing.

All were either bears or spirits;
Every bear was walking upright
With a spectre for his partner
Whitely muffled in her shroud.

Paired together thus, they started,
To and fro they waltzed and whirled.
'Twas a curious sight, provoking
Both to terror and to laughter!

To keep step and dance in rhythm
With those white and airy figures
Who so lightly swayed and circled,
Was a bitter task for bears.

But the wretched beasts were driven,
Forced inexorably onward,
Till the double-bass orchestral
By their snorting was outrumbled.

Now and then the waltzing couples
Would collide; on which the bear
Would kick out against the spectre
That had jostled him in passing.

In the tumult of the dancing
Oft some bear would pull the cerement
From the face of his companion,
And disclose a grinning death's-head;

Till the trumpets and the cymbals
Blared and crashed at last together,
And the drums boomed out their thunder,
And the gallopade began.

But the dream was never ended,
For a bear uncouth and clumsy
On my corns so rudely trampled,
That I shouted and awoke.

## Caput XXII.

Phœbus in his sunny chariot
Lashed along his flaming horses,
And his journey through the heavens
Had already half accomplished,

While I lay in slumber, dreaming
Of the bears and of the spirits
Strangely intertwined and woven,
Like some arabesque fantastic.

It was noon when I awakened,
And I found myself alone,
For my hostess and Lascaro
On the chase betimes had started.

None was with me in the hovel
Save the pug, who, standing upright
On the hearth before the kettle,
Held a spoon with both his paws.

They had admirably trained him,
When the soup was boiling over,
With the spoon at once to stir it,
And to skim away the bubbles.

But am I myself bewitched then?
Or can fever still be burning
In my brain? My ears must surely
Play me false. The pug is speaking.

Yes, he speaks; indeed the language
Is the simple, homely Swabian;
As if lost in thought, he muses
With a dreamy air, as follows:

"Oh, unhappy Swabian poet,
Who, afar in exile weary,
As a cursëd pug must languish,
Set to watch a witch's kettle!

"What a shameful crime and cruel
Is this sorcery! How tragic
Is my fate: these human feelings
In the body of a dog!

"In my home had I but tarried
With my tried and trusty schoolmates!
They are certainly no wizards,
Not a soul have they enchanted.

"Had I only tarried yonder
With Karl Mayer, in my Swabia
With the wallflowers of my country,
And its simple, honest broth!

"I could die to-day of longing
For my home—to see the chimneys
And the smoke, where they are cooking
Vermicelli in my Stukkert!"

With emotion deep I heard him;
From my bed in haste upspringing,
On the hearth I sank beside him,
And addressed him with compassion.

"Noble singer, what has brought thee
To this wretched witch's hovel?
Whence this gruesome transformation
To the semblance of a dog?"

Overjoyed the poet answered,
"Is it true?" Thou art no Frenchman,
But a German, and the meaning
Of my monologue hast followed?

"Ah, my brother, what a pity
That, when over pipes and beer
In the inn we sat discoursing,
Kölle, councillor-of-legation,

"On the point was so insistent,
That one only gained through travel
The refinement and the culture
He himself had won abroad.

"That my legs, with use grown suppler,
Might be cured of their uncouthness:
That my manners might, like Kölle's,
Take a finer worldly polish,

"I forsook my home and started
To enlarge my mind by travel,—
To the Pyrenees directed,
Reached the hovel of Uraka,

"With a note of introduction
From my friend, Justinus Kerner,
Never dreaming that my comrade
Was in wicked league with witches.

"I was welcomed by Uraka,
But her friendship, to my horror,
Soon degenerated vilely
Into hot, unholy passion.

"Yes, impure desire still flickered
In the loathly withered bosom
Of the foul, abandoned creature:
She attempted to seduce me.

"But I prayed, 'Excuse me, Madam;
I belong not to the flighty,
Frisky followers of Goethe,
But to Swabia's school of poets.

"'Virgin Modesty our muse is,
And her drawers are made of leather—
Thickest leather—Do not tamper
With my virtue, I entreat thee!

"'Other poets have their genius,
Have their fancy, or their passion;
We, the poet sons of Swabia,
Take our stand upon our virtue.

"''Tis indeed our sole possession.
Rob me not, then, of this cover
For my nakedness—this moral
And religious beggar's mantle!'

"So I spake; but grim, ironic,
Smiled the woman, and, thus smiling,
Took some mistletoe and touched me
With a twig upon the head.

"Then I felt a cold discomfort
All at once, as if a goose-skin
Had been drawn across my body;
But alas! it was no goose-skin,

"It was worse—for, with a dog-skin,
She had covered and unmanned me—
From that dire and dreadful moment
I have been the pug you see me."

Not another word, poor fellow!
Could he utter for his sobbing;
So disconsolate his weeping,
That in tears he almost melted.

I said sorrowfully, "Listen.
Peradventure I might free thee
From the dog-skin, and restore thee
To humanity and art."

But he raised his paws to heaven,
Inconsolable, despairing,
And made answer, sighing deeply,
Groaning bitterly made answer,

"Till the Day of Doom, imprisoned
In this pug-skin I must languish.
Only virginal devotion
Can unloose the spell that binds me.

"Yes, a spotless virgin only,
Whom no man has ever sullied,
Can deliver me, if faithful
To the following condition:

"On the night of Saint Sylvester
Must this virgin without blemish
Read the works of Gustav Pfeizer,
Without dozing off to sleep.

"Could she stay awake while reading,
Keep her modest eyes from slumber,
The enchantment would be broken:
I should breathe, a man, undogged."

"Ah, if that be so," I answered,
"'Tis indeed beyond my power
To deliver thee; for, firstly,
I am no unspotted virgin.

"And still less could I accomplish,
In the second place, the reading
Of the works of Gustav Pfeizer,
Without falling fast asleep."

## Caput XXIII.

From the witch's care uncanny
We descended to the hollow.
On the Positive we planted
Once again our feet securely.

Hence ye ghosts! Ye midnight faces!
Forms of air, and dreams of fever!
We will sensibly devote us
To the death of Atta Troll.

In the hole beside the young ones
Lies the father lapped in slumber:
Snores the snore of honest virtue,
And at last awakens yawning.

Perched beside him, Master One-Ear
At his furry head keeps scratching,
Like a rhyme-pursuing poet;
With his claws he marks the scansion.

Atta Troll's beloved daughters,
On their backs beside the father,
Lie in slumber, softly dreaming—
Lilies innocent, four-footed.

Ah, what fond and tender fancies
Fill the budding souls with yearning—
Souls of bears so white and virgin?
Tear-bedewed théir gentle eyes are.

The most deeply thrilled and shaken
Is the youngest. Blissful leaping
Of the heart she feels already—
Foretaste sweet of Cupid's power.

Yes, the little god transfixed her
With his arrow through the fur,
When she saw the fate-decreed one,
Who—ye heavens!—is a man,

And no other than Schnapphahnski.
As he fled for life one morning
From the foe, he chanced to pass her,
Hot of foot upon the mountain.

Heroes fallen on misfortune
Always wake a woman's pity.
On our hero's face were graven
Pallid want and gloomy sorrow.

All his military chest—
Two-and-twenty silver groschen—
All he brought to Spain was forfeit,
And the spoil of Espartero.

Nothing saved! His very watch
Left behind at Pampeluna
In a pawn-shop, though an heirloom
Very precious, solid silver.

So with long-legged speed he passed her;
Never dreamed that he was winning
Something better than a battle,
More than victory—a heart!

Luckless bear! She loves and pines for
The hereditary foe!
Did her father guess the secret,
How terrific were his growling!

From the aged Edoardo
Who, with civic pride transported,
Stabbed Emilia Galotti,
Atta Troll would take example.

He would sooner slay his daughter,
With his claws himself destroy her,
Than paternally resign her
To the arms of even a prince!

But his mood is for the moment
Soft and tender; far from prompting
To the crushing of a rosebud,
Ere the stormy winds have stripped it.

In the cavern, by his children,
Pensive, mild, lies Atta Troll.
Yearning fills him—solemn omen—
For the land of the hereafter!

With a sigh he murmurs, "Children,"—
And the sudden tears well over—
"Now my pilgrimage is ended
On the earth, and we must part.

"For I dreamed this noon while sleeping,
Dreamed a dream of solemn import;
To my soul the blissful foretaste
Of approaching death was granted.

"I am far from superstitious—
Am no foolish bear—yet many
Are the things 'twixt earth and heaven
That no thinker can unravel.

"While the world and fate I pondered,
Yawning wearily, I slept;
And I dreamed that I was lying
With a spreading tree above me.

"Yes, I dreamed that purest honey
From the branches green was dropping:
That it glided down my muzzle,
And I felt a wondrous bliss.

"Blinking upward in my rapture,
I could see that on the topmost
Of the boughs were seven bears,
Little bears that slid and gambolled.

"They were tender, dainty creatures,
And their coats were red as roses,
With a fluffy, silky something
Like a wing upon the shoulders.

"Yes, those little bears like roses
Were adorned with silken wings,
And they sang a song celestial
With their sweet and flute-like voices!

"While they sang, my skin grew icy,
But my soul from out my body
Like a flame to heaven mounted,
With a bright and burning glory."

Thus with tremulous emotion
Softly grunted Atta Troll;
Sat a moment sad and silent;
Then he pricked excited ears,

And began to quiver strangely;
From his couch he sprang, and shaking
With his joy, for joy he bellowed,
"Did ye hear that sound, my children?

"Was not that the voice beloved
Of your mother? Oh, I know it,
Know the growling of my Mumma,
Of my own, my swarthy Mumma!"

Atta Troll, when he had spoken,
Darted headlong from the cavern
Like a madman, to his ruin!
Ah, he rushed upon his doom!

## Caput XXIV.

In the Vale of Roncesvalles,
On the spot where once the nephew
Of King Charlemagne in battle
Fell and yielded up his spirit;

Fell and perished Atta Troll:
Fell by treason, as that other
Fell by Ganelon of Mainz
Who gave Chivalry its Judas.

What, alas! in bears is noblest—
Faithful conjugal affection—
Was the snare by which Uraka
Lured our hero to perdition.

With such mastery she mimicked
Swarthy Mumma's growl and bellow,
That poor Atta Troll was tempted
From the safety of his cavern.

Borne along on wings of yearning,
To a rock below he hurried;
Stood with puzzled tender snuffing;
Fancied Mumma was behind it—

'T was, alas! Lascaro hidden
With the gun; who aimed and shot him
Through the heart that beat so gladly—
Forth the crimson blood came streaming.

Once or twice his head he waggled;
Then he sank with piteous groaning;
Gave a last convulsive quiver;
And his latest sigh was, "Mumma!"

So the noble hero fell.
So he died. But from his ashes
He will rise, and live for ever
In the bard's immortal numbers.

He will rise again in song,
And his fame will be colossal.
On four-footed trochees proudly
He will stride across the world.

And a monument King Louis
Will erect him in Walhalla,
And inscribe it with this legend
In his lapidary manner:

"Atta Troll, a bear of bias;
Good, religious; loving husband;
Sans-culotte of sylvan breeding,
With the age's folly tainted;

"Wretched dancer; stern convictions
In his shaggy bosom nursing;
Stinking badly on occasion;
Talents *nil;* a character!"

## Caput XXV.

Three-and-thirty aged women,
On their heads the old Biscayan
Hood of scarlet, stood with welcome
At the entrance to the village.

One like Deborah was dancing,
On the tambourine was smiting—
Hymned the praises of Lascaro,
Of the mighty bear-destroyer.

Four robust and stalwart natives
Bore the slaughtered bear in triumph,
On his haunches seated upright
Like a patient at the baths.

And behind him like relations
Of the dead there came Lascaro,
With Uraka nodding greetings
Right and left, though much embarrassed.

The assistant Mayor gave them
Quite a speech before the town-hall,
Where the proud procession halted.
He discoursed on many subjects;

For example, on the increase
And importance of the navy;
On the press, the beetroot question,
And the curse of party-spirit.

After copiously expounding
Louis Philippe's many merits,
He proceeded to the bear
And Lascaro's great achievement.

"Thou, Lascaro!" cried the speaker,
As he wiped his sweating forehead
With his Spanish sash tricoloured,
"Thou, Lascaro! Thou, Lascaro!

"Who hast France and Spain delivered
From the fear of Atta Troll,
Both the lands acclaim thee hero,
Pyrenean Lafayette!"

When Lascaro heard his prowess
Thus officially exalted,
In his beard for satisfaction
Laughing low, he blushed for pleasure,

And in words abrupt and broken
That came stumbling o'er each other,
He expressed himself as grateful
For the proud, prodigious honour.

All with wonder and amazement
Viewed the spectacle unwonted,
And the aged women murmured
In alarm beneath their breath,

"Why, Lascaro has been laughing!
Why, Lascaro has been blushing!
Why, Lascaro has been speaking!
He, the witch's son, the dead man!"—

As for Atta Troll, they skinned him,
And they sold his hide by auction;
It was purchased by a furrier
For a hundred francs that day.

Very handsomely he dressed it;
With a scarlet border trimmed it;
And disposed of it for double
The amount that he had given.

Then my Juliet, as owner,
Came the third in the succession.
In her room it lies at Paris,
As a rug beside her bed.

Oh, at night how often barefoot
On the brown and mortal cover
Of my hero I have trodden,
On the skin of Atta Troll;

And, when sorrowfully musing,
Have recalled the words of Schiller:
"What in song shall be immortal,
First must perish from the earth."

## Caput XXVI.

What of Mumma? Ah, poor Mumma
Is a woman, therefore weak!
Frailty's name, alas! is woman:
Porcelain is not half so brittle.

When the hand of fate had snatched her
From her great and glorious husband,
To her sorrow she succumbed not,
Did not pine and die of grieving.

On the contrary, existence
Was as gay for her as ever;
Still she danced before the public,
Courting daily its approval;

Till a permanent appointment
And establishment for life
She obtained at last in Paris,
In the famed Botanic Garden.

In that garden, with my Juliet
When I walked the other Sunday,
Holding forth to her on Nature,
On the beasts and plants and flowers,

On the golden pheasants, cedars
Of Mount Lebanon, giraffes,
On the dromedary, zebra—
While we strolled along conversing—

On the way we stood together
By the rampart of the pit
Where the bears are kept,—and Heavens!
What a spectacle transfixed us!

An enormous desert-bear
From Siberia, white and shaggy,
Much too amorously sported
Down below us with a she-bear;

And the she-bear was our Mumma!
Was the wife of Atta Troll!
By the moist and tender gleaming
Of her gentle eyes I knew her.

Yes, 'twas she, the swarthy daughter
Of the South! 'Twas she, our Mumma,
Living mated with a Russian,
A barbarian of the North!

Said a negro with a simper,
Who had sidled up towards us,
"On the earth could aught be fairer
Than the sight of happy lovers?"

And I answered, "Prithee, tell me
Who thus honours me by speaking."
But the negro cried, astounded,
"Has my face, then, been forgotten?

"I am he, the Moorish monarch
Who in Freiligrath went drumming.
In your Germany most wretched
Was my life—such isolation!

"Here, however, where as keeper
I have duly been appointed,
'Mongst the plants, the lions, tigers
Of my home amid the tropics,

"It is vastly more congenial
Than of old, when as a drummer
At your German fairs I figured,
Daily drumming, badly fed.

"And but recently I married
An Alsatian cook, a blonde.
By her ample arms encircled,
I am solaced in my exile.

"When I see her feet they mind me
Of our elephants for grace,
While her French recalls the sweetness
Of my black, my mother tongue.

"When she scolds—and that is often—
I can hear the rattling drum,
See the skulls that dangled round it—
Snakes and lions fled before it.

"But by moonlight she is tender
And she weeps with soft emotion
Like the crocodile, for coolness
From the tepid river peeping.

"And the dainty toothsome morsels
That she gives me! I am thriving:
Have an appetite as healthy
As of old, beside the Niger.

"I am fat; am now the owner
Of a paunch—a swarthy crescent
That my shirt of snowy linen
Like a fleecy cloud envelops."

## CAPUT XXVII.

(TO AUGUST VARNHAGEN VON ENSE.)

"Where in heaven, Master Louis,
Did you ferret out and fish up
All this crass and crazy rubbish?"
D'Este the Cardinal exclaimed,

Reading Ariosto's poem
On the frenzy of Orlando,
Which was dedicated humbly
To his Eminence exalted.

Yes, my good old friend Varnhagen,
Yes, your lips, I see, are moving
With the very words he uttered,
With a smile as keen and subtle.

As you read I hear you laughing!
Yet at times the thoughtful furrows
In your lofty brow will deepen,
And old memories awaken.

"Was not that the very music
Of the dreams I dreamed by moonlight
In my youth, beside Chamisso,
And Brentano, and Fouqué?

"Was not that the holy chiming
Of the long-lost forest chapel,
With the cap and bells familiar
In the pauses slyly jingling?

"Through the nightingale's sweet chorus
Booms the double-bass of bears,
Which, in turn, resolves and changes
Into soft and ghostly sighing.

"Here would madness pose as wisdom!
Here is wisdom gone demented!
Dying groans that in a moment
Cease, and bubble into laughter!"

Yes, the sounds, my friend, come ringing
From that time of dreams forgotten,
Though some modern trills and quavers
To the olden tunes are added.

And for all the gay bravado,
You will find despair in plenty—
To your charity long-proven
Be this poem, then, commended!

'Tis perhaps the last unfettered
Woodland song of the Romantic!
In our daylight din of battle
It will sadly die and cease.

Other times and other birds!
Other birds and other songs!
What a cackling! It reminds one
Of the geese who saved the city.

What a chirping! 'Tis of sparrows,
In their claws a farthing rushlight,
Aping Jove's celestial eagles
With the awful thunderbolt!

What a cooing! 'Tis of doves,
Turtle-doves no longer lovers:
Haters now who, false to Venus,
Draw the chariot of Bellona!

What a buzzing shakes the world!
'Tis the loud colossal May-bugs
Of the spring-time of the people,
With insensate fury smitten.

Other times and other birds!
Other birds and other songs!—
That belike would give me pleasure
Had I only other ears!

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